

*Personalities* IN SOCIAL REFORM

## BOOKS BY G. BROMLEY OXNAM

PERSONALITIES IN SOCIAL REFORM  
LABOR AND TOMORROW'S WORLD  
PREACHING IN A REVOLUTIONARY AGE  
FACING THE FUTURE UNAFRAID  
BEHOLD THY MOTHER  
BY THIS SIGN CONQUER  
THE ETHICAL IDEALS OF JESUS IN A CHANGING WORLD  
SOCIAL PRINCIPLES OF JESUS  
RUSSIAN IMPRESSIONS  
YOUTH AND THE NEW AMERICA  
THE STIMULUS OF CHRIST

### *As Editor*

EFFECTIVE PREACHING  
CREATIVE PREACHING  
CONTEMPORARY PREACHING  
VARIETIES OF PRESENT-DAY PREACHING  
PREACHING AND THE SOCIAL CRISIS



# Personalities IN SOCIAL REFORM

G. Bromley Oxnam



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## PERSONALITIES IN SOCIAL REFORM

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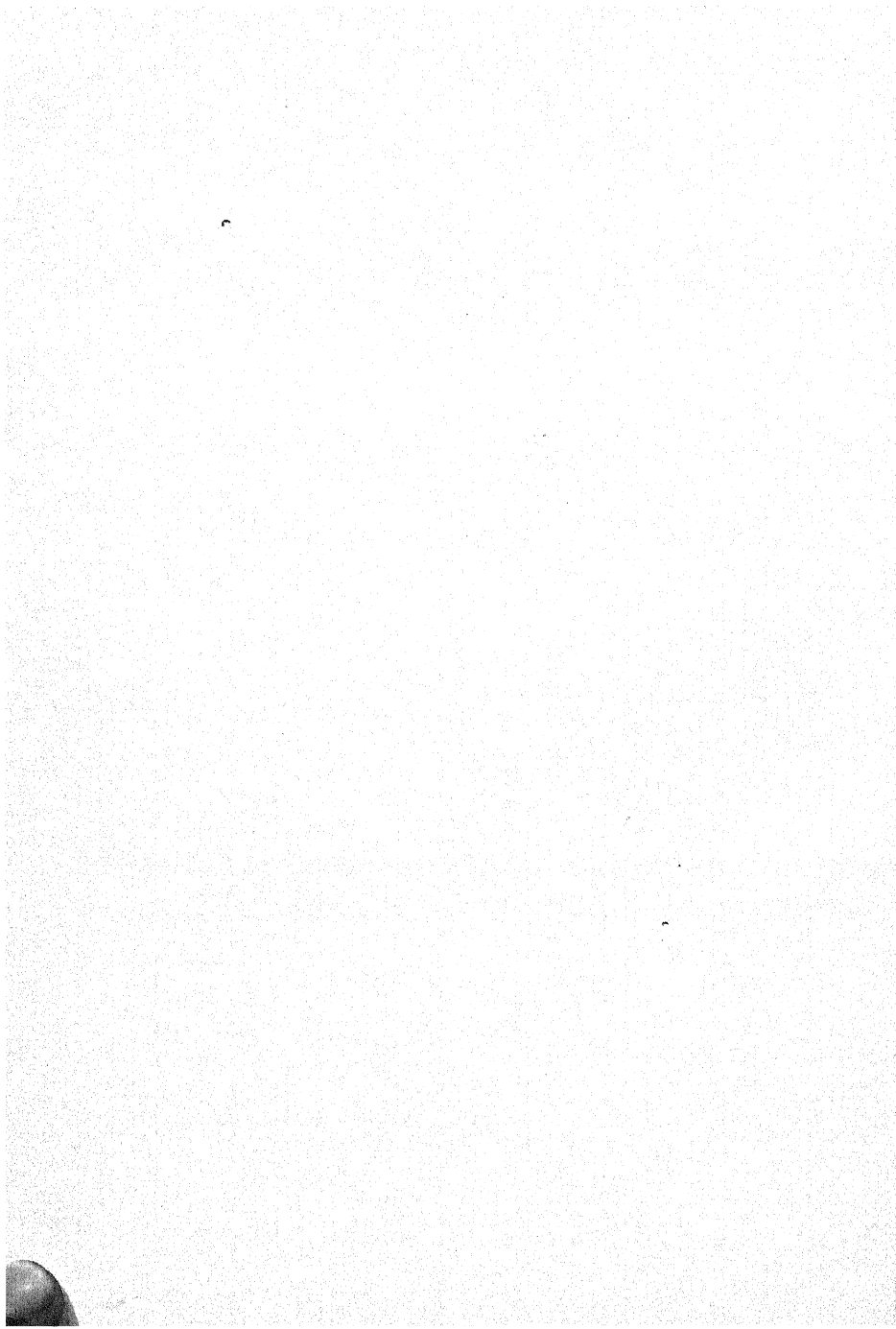
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TO

EMORY S. BOGARDUS

*Inspiring teacher, distinguished sociologist and considerate friend, whose researches and writings, lectures and discussions, have sent forth a generation of disciples resolved to preserve a free society in which free men may in creative co-operation establish justice and brotherhood.*



## Foreword

WE HAVE BEEN CATAPULTED into an era of change. It is not a question of change or continuity. It is a question of the nature of change. Is it to be the change of consent, or the change of coercion? Consent involves democracy. Coercion implies dictatorship.

In democracy, the free man in co-operation with free men reaches agreement concerning practices that give evidence of enriching personality. He finds his own best interest in the common good, but knows he makes his most creative contribution to the common good when society guarantees him the freedom requisite to the fullest expression of his individual talents. In dictatorship, mind and body are shackled, and the enslaved march under the orders of their minority masters, who lure the unthinking by Pied Piper promises of utopia. But the promised land is never reached by avenues of dictatorship. Still the people listen to "the Leader" and will continue to do so until democracy becomes dynamic, and turns its creative powers to the solution of the fundamental questions of power and of justice. Power must be brought under democratic control, and justice must be established by the democratic process.

The role of personality is discounted by economic determinists. The Marxist holds that the prevailing mode of production determines the institutions and practices of an epoch. These studies consider the place of personality in social reform, and demonstrate, I think, that man can lay hold upon

## FOREWORD

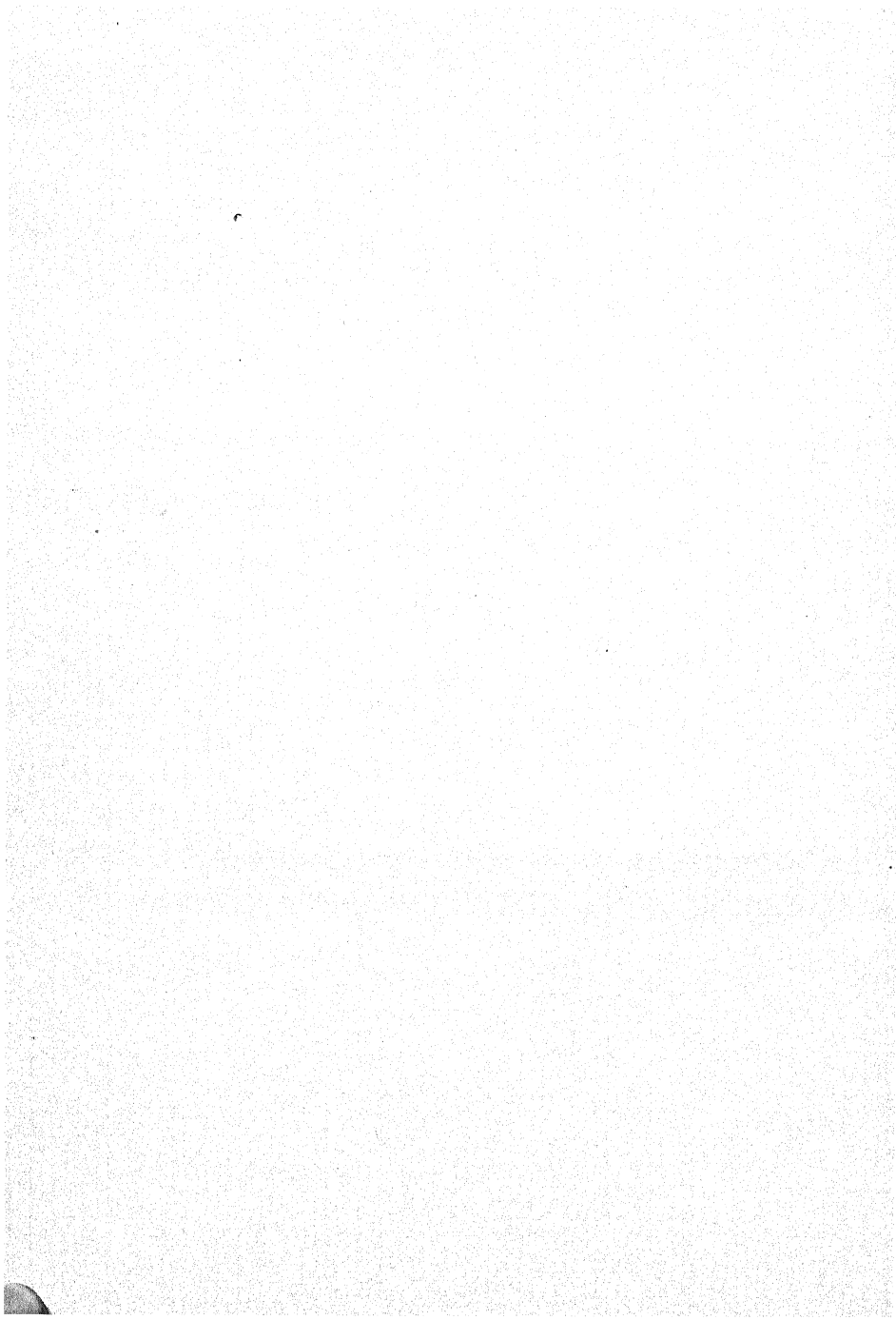
scientific means to achieve moral ends. Each of the reformers studied is grounded in an overmastering faith in God. Each holds there is a moral law binding upon all. Each believes that it is within the power of man to discover the concrete means through which the moral ideal may come alive in the practices of the common life. These reformers find supreme value to lie in personality and hold that personality can only flower in freedom. They would rebase and remotivate society to the end that God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. Theirs is the reform that regenerates.

This book grew out of a series of lectures delivered at Drew Theological Seminary on the Ezra Squier Tipple Foundation. To Arlo Ayres Brown, who extended the invitation during the closing year of his distinguished service to Drew University and to Christian education in the United States, and to Mrs. Brown, I desire to record my affectionate appreciation and respect; and to President Fred Holloway, whose farseeing leadership and dynamic devotion to the Christian ideal in education insure great advances for Drew University in the years ahead, and to Mrs. Holloway, charming hostess during our visit to the campus, I would like to express for Mrs. Oxnam and me a gratitude that is deep and abiding. I am greatly indebted to Miss Christine Knudsen for her painstaking care in the preparation of the manuscript for the press, her patient work in obtaining the many permissions necessary for the extensive quotation from the works of these great reformers, and her continuing interest in the material even after several readings must have made further study a trial.

G. BROMLEY OXNAM

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Chapter I . . . . . The Scholar as  
Social Reformer

## *Sidney and Beatrice Webb*

IT WAS A GRAY AFTERNOON IN MIDWINTER. THE TRAFFIC OF Westminster flowed down Whitehall. Of the thousands who turned left to cross the bridge, or went straight on past the Houses of Parliament, or to the right by St. Margaret's, few were aware of the distinguished company that assembled in the Abbey.

The nave was in semidarkness, the memorials scarcely visible, as the Prime Minister stepped to the lectern and, speaking in quiet dignity, paid tribute to "a man and woman who, in perfect partnership, made a unique contribution to human progress and devoted themselves throughout their lives to service of their fellow men and women." Clement Atlee continued, "By their life work, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, more widely than any others of their generation, changed for the better the conditions of the masses of the people. In field after field of social endeavor, we are today reaping the fruit of the seed which they sowed in the minds and hearts of men and women. It is right, therefore, that their ashes should lie in the heart of the City of Westminster in which for so many years they fought the good fight, and close to Parliament and Whitehall where they won so many victories."

Diminutive caskets containing the ashes of two scholars were placed beneath the stone floor of Westminster Abbey close to the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, and Sidney and Beatrice Webb took their place in "the great company of monarchs, statesmen, sages, poets and fighting men" who have their memorials within those walls. It was the first time in the nine-hundred-year history of the Abbey that a husband and a wife were thus honored simultaneously. When the service was concluded and the great had gone, a small bouquet of yellow flowers lay upon the covering soon to be removed by the workmen so that the stone might be put in place. It is a square slab, set diamondwise. At the top are the names "Sidney and Beatrice"; at the bottom, on the left, "1859-1947," his dates; and on the right, "1858-1943," her dates; in the center in larger letters, the surname "Webb."

Thus they were laid to rest.

# I

Beatrice Potter was reared in a home of wealth. She was born in Standish House in the Cotswolds, a great Victorian establishment with flower gardens and an artificial lake. In the spring, the Potters went to London for the social season and then to their home in Westmoreland called Rushland Hall. The Argoed was another large house in Monmouthshire overlooking the Wye Valley. And, of course, there were trips to the Continent.

Her father had early "developed a taste for adventurous enterprise and a talent for industrial diplomacy." He held many important posts, among them the chairmanship of the Board of the Great Western Railway, the presidency of the Grand Trunk Railroad of Canada, a directorship in the

Hudson Bay Company. She speaks of him as "the central figure of the family life—the light and warmth of the home." He loved poetry, drama, history, idealistic philosophy; read Dante in the original, and was a careful student of Shakespeare and of Plato. "He always talked to us as equals," she writes, and "would discuss with his daughters, even when they were young girls, not only business affairs, but also religion, politics, and the problems of sex with frankness and freedom."

In her autobiographical study, *My Apprenticeship*, she records: "The central article of his political faith was, indeed, a direct denial of democracy: an instinctive conviction, confirmed, as he thought, by his experience of American institutions, that the rulers of the country . . . ought, in the main, to be drawn from a leisured class—all the better if the property upon which the leisure depended was inherited property." Involved as he was in great enterprise, lumber, manufacturing, railroading, and concessions from government, deep as were his convictions concerning "the people," he was nevertheless "always ready to compromise with new forces and to adjust his political program to social circumstances." When the suffrage had been lowered, he became enthusiastic about working class education. She tells us he was never tired of asserting, "We must educate our masters." Beatrice gives another illuminating insight into her father's character: "It seems incredible, but I know that, as a man, he repeated the prayer taught him at his mother's lap—'Gentle Jesus, meek and mild, look upon a little child.'"

It was only during the few short years before her mother's death that Beatrice came to know this woman of unusual ability. She, too, had come from a home of wealth. Her daughter writes, "She had been reared by and with men, and

she disliked women. She was destined to have nine daughters and to lose her only son. Moreover, her daughters were not the sort of women she admired and approved, . . . refused to be educated and defied caste conventions, . . . unmistakably Potters. . . . Her soul longed for the mystical consolation and moral discipline of religious orthodoxy. She spent hours studying the Greek Testament and the fathers of the church; and she practiced religious rites with exemplary regularity. But she had inherited from her father an iconoclastic intellect . . . an ardent student of Adam Smith and Malthus . . . she had been brought up in the strictest sect of Utilitarian economists. . . . She realized the hopeless inconsistency of this theory of human nature and human conduct with her mystical cravings, either with the Sermon on the Mount or with *The Imitation of Christ*." As she withdrew from London society, she became more absorbed in study, especially languages and their grammars. She resolved to master twelve languages before her death.

In a remorseful note in her diary, a few months after her mother's death, Beatrice wrote, "I never knew how much she had done for me, . . . how many of my best habits I had taken from her, how strong would be the influence of her personality. . . . I think of her and her intellectual strivings which we were too ready to call useless, and which yet will be the originating impulse of all my ambition, urging me onward towards something better in action and thought."

From childhood Beatrice and her sisters enjoyed the privilege of associating with gifted persons on terms of conversational equality. Men of affairs in business and politics, distinguished men of science, and leaders of thought in philosophy and religion, were guests in the Potter home.

Herbert Spencer was an intimate friend of the family, she became his apprentice, and was named by him as his literary executor. She was later to record, "The talents entrusted to my care were a tireless intellectual curiosity together with a double dose of will power." At ten years of age she had written, "The education of girls is very much neglected in the way of their private reading. Take, for instance, a girl of nine or ten years old, she is either forbidden to read any but child books, or she is let loose on a good library; Sir Walter Scott's novels recommended to her as charming and interesting stories, 'books that cannot possibly do any harm,' her adviser declares." She reaches a somewhat mature conclusion for a ten-year-old child, namely, that while novels cultivate imagination, if they are taken as "continual nourishment," they destroy a young mind because the reader centers thought on love scenes, building castles in the air, on the "charming heroine without a fault."

The circumstances of their social position did not permit Beatrice to seek out one of the few university institutions open to women. The family went to London for the social season. There was presentation at court, and also riding in the Row, calls, lunches and dinners, "dances and crushes, Hurlingham and Ascot, not to mention amateur theatricals and other sham philanthropic excrescences." Vacillation between resolves to keep out of society and to make a go of it are recorded in her diaries. In one of the "keep out" periods she concentrated on attending debates in the House of Commons. "I recollect," she says, "spending hours listening to debates—loathing Gladstone and losing my heart to Disraeli."

A long journey to Canada and the United States took her as far as California, where she became fascinated by the poetry

of Joaquin Miller, and during which she had severe intellectual struggles in the realm of faith. She records, "I am really trying to gain a firm belief for myself. . . . I think it is no good going to others to have your beliefs cut out for you; you must examine, study, both the Bible and those who follow the Bible and those who don't. It is no sin to doubt, but it is a sin, after you have doubted, not to find out to the best of your capability why you doubt and whether you have reason to doubt. It was because no one doubted and because everyone was too idle to examine and to prove, that Christianity became so corrupted in the Middle Ages. I must make a faith for myself, and I must work, work, until I have."

A Unitarian, she finally resolved to prepare herself to receive the Holy Sacrament from the Church of England. This she did. But with the passing of the London season of 1876 her feeble hold on Orthodox Christianity disappeared for a time. Serious study of the religions of the East followed. She records, "I have indeed altered my religious beliefs this last six months to an extent I should never have thought possible a year ago. I was vainly trying to smother my instinct for truth in clinging to the old faith. And now that I have shaken off the chains of the beautiful old faith, shall I rise to something higher, or shall I stare about me like a newly liberated slave, unable to decide which way to go, and perhaps the worse for being freed from the service of a kind master? Do I look on death and trouble with less calmness than I used?"

She kept a manuscript book of notes and diary from childhood. It is the record of the amazing development of an equally amazing mind. On her return from California, a girl of sixteen, she enters the following note: "I am now busily engaged in studying. I am translating Faust and reading a

novel of Tieck. . . . I think it is far more powerful than Tasso. . . . I have left off music almost entirely. . . . Drawing is what I should like to excel in, and now in the evenings, before I go and read Shakespeare to Miss Mitchel [her sister's nursery governess] I make a point of copying one of the patterns of the School of Art book, and correcting it with compass and ruler. . . . I don't think it hurts at all, now and then, to read some of St. Paul's life instead of studying German, say twice a week."

Before her mother's death and of course before her final choice of a craft, her secret mission was "to win recognition as an intellectual worker. . . . I longed to write a book that would be read; but I had no notion about what I wanted to write." And as she was later to note, "I became aware that I belonged to a class of persons who habitually gave orders, but who seldom, if ever, executed the orders of other people."

Thus she was reared.

## II

He did not come from a home of wealth. Sidney James was the second child born to Charles and Ada Webb. They lived in Cranbourn Street, Leicester Square, one of the most densely populated areas of London. His mother, left an orphan, chose self-reliance rather than family charity. She borrowed enough money to move to London and set up a hair-dressing establishment, which proved to be a successful venture, as did her subsequent marriage to Charles Webb, an accountant and constant reader, a man of intellectual interests, community spirit and liberal views. Sidney and his brother Charles were sent to Switzerland to learn French, and later to a pastor's home in Wisnar to learn German.

There is little biographical material available concerning Sidney Webb. *St. Martin's Review* published a few articles entitled "Reminiscences" in which Sidney records, "After a few lessons at my mother's knee, which I do not remember, I had taught myself to read at an early age, very largely from the books and notices displayed in the shop windows, a source of endless interest. It used to take me a full hour to get the whole length of Fleet Street, so absorbing were the pages of the periodicals there exposed to view. . . . It was from the steps of St. Martin's Church that, as a very little boy, I saw my first Lord Mayor's Show. I remember my mother telling me on that occasion—and it seems to have sunk in—that if I was a good boy, I might myself one day be Lord Mayor! In short, I grew up a patriotic Londoner, very early declaring that no place on earth (I knew nothing of any other place) would content me for habitation, other than the very middle of London that I knew." His schooling, which included Sunday school, followed the normal course, and at sixteen he became a wage earner, beginning as a clerk in the city office of a colonial broker. He attended evening classes at London University, and in 1878 took the open competitive examinations for the civil service. He was always first in examinations, and took all the prizes. He won a place in the War Office, and the next year after successful examinations, he was assigned to the Surveyor of Taxes. The year following, he took additional examinations, was again first and passed so high that he could have entered the Foreign Office, but he chose the Colonial Office, and there, as a civil servant, served ten years.

George Bernard Shaw described Sidney's intellectual attainments after hearing him deliver a brief address. Sidney was twenty years of age. Shaw writes, "The speaker was a young



man of about twenty-one; . . . he knew all about the subject of the debate; knew more than the lecturer; knew more than anybody present; had read everything that had ever been written on the subject; and remembered all the facts that bore upon it. He used notes, read them, and ticked them off one by one and threw them away; and finished with a coolness and clearness that to me, in my then trembling state, seemed miraculous. This young man was the ablest man in England—Sidney Webb.”

Sidney was consumed by the desire to know and driven by the longing to serve. He took his degree in Law at the London University, and gave lectures to the London Workingman's College. Mary Agnes Hamilton in *Sidney and Beatrice Webb, a Study in Contemporary Biography* relates:

“Bernard Shaw tells two stories of Sidney Webb as a young man, which are highly illuminating. When he was a Colonial Office clerk, he and Shaw were on holiday in France. To the post office, Webb, talking French admirably and looking quite like a French bourgeois, conveyed a vast parcel of official papers. These, he insisted, could go through the post for halfpenny. The clerk protested. He insisted. If the code were consulted, it would be found that para. X on p. X vol. X, entitled him to despatch official papers at this rate. The clerk, impressed, wavered; consulted his superior. That functionary brought down the volume cited—and, of course, Webb was right. After that, as Shaw says, he could have posted all his laundry home for halfpenny.

“The other story is even more interesting. Again the two were abroad together; this time in Haarlem, in a tram. Into this tram, a young man consigned to prison, was brought by his guard. He was not handcuffed, but to his wrists a long

chain was fastened. Plainly he was wretched, selfconscious, ashamed, an outcast. The tram stopped near the prison: he was led out by his guard, between the long lines of other passengers, looking about him miserably. Suddenly, his head lifted, his expression cleared, something like a smile played over his lips. He had recovered his self-respect. How had this happened? The explanation was simple. Earlier in the day Shaw and Webb had, as travellers will, purchased a large piece of marzipan. They had eaten enough: perhaps even a trifle too much. Yet a large lump remained, bulging in Sidney's pocket. As the young prisoner was led past him, he had stuffed the sweet into his hand."

Sidney was not one of the founders of the famous Fabian Society, but he, Bernard Shaw, Graham Wallas and Sidney Olivier early became members of that extraordinary group. A stream of pamphlets flowed from the deliberations of this body, texts is perhaps the better term, a majority of them written by Webb. *Facts for Socialists* released in 1887, and *Facts for Londoners* the next year, had remarkable influence. He insisted upon facing facts and argued constantly for practical proposals. They decided to give Karl Marx careful study. At that time, the first volume of *Das Kapital* was available only in French. They soon found they were not in agreement with Marx. Webb insisted that Marx deliberately evaded the Ricardian Law of Rent. After reading the third volume in German, he said it was "no good." The little group reached the conclusion they could not be Marxian.

From 1887 on, the Fabians called for the formation of a strong and independent labor party. In 1923, Sidney Webb was elected chairman of the Labor Party's National Executive. At the close of his presidential address, he said, "Finally, let

me remind you that there is a higher need even than government, whether it be the government of a city or the government of our temper, or the government of our tongues. It is not upon its plan or its programs, not even upon its principles or its ideals—that a political party is ultimately judged. It is not upon them or any of them that its measure of success and the continued appeal to the judgment of the average citizen finally depends. The success of the Labor Party in this country depends, more than anything else, upon the spirit in which we hold our faith, the spirit in which we present our proposals, the spirit in which we meet our opponents in debate, the spirit in which we fulfill our own obligations, the spirit in which, with inevitable backslidings, we live our own lives. We shall not achieve much, whatever changes we can bring about, unless what we do is done in the spirit of fellowship. For we must always remember that the founder of British Socialism was not Karl Marx, but Robert Owen, and that Robert Owen preached not 'class war' but the English doctrine of human brotherhood—the hope, the faith, the living fact of human fellowship—a faith and hope reaffirmed in the words of that other great British Socialist, William Morris.”

And thus he was reared and developed.

### III

Sidney and Beatrice had lived more than thirty years before becoming aware of the existence of the other. At twenty-five she had reached a definite conclusion: “From the flight of emotion away from the service of God to the service of man, and from the current faith in the scientific method, I drew the

inference that the most hopeful form of social service was the craft of a social investigator."

She visited her mother's relatives in Bacup, lived incognito with the weavers, studied the co-operative store. In her diary, February, 1884, she wrote, "When I was at Bacup I felt as if I were living through a page of puritan history; felt that I saw the actual thing, human beings governed by one idea; devotion to Christ, with no struggle or thought about the world; in every action of their daily life living unto God. And I realized the strength of the motive which enlightened persons believe is passing away. I realized the permeating influence, and wondered what would fill the void it would leave, what inspiring motive would take its place?" Later she met Octavia Hill, one of the chief figures in the Charity Organization Society, and Samuel and Henrietta Barnett, who founded Toynbee Hall in the East End of London. She engaged in rent collection in the Soho District, and was on the way to active participation in social research when her father was stricken with paralysis.

She returned to be with him, carrying on her studies which resulted in two essays, one "The History of English Economics" and the other "The Economic Theory of Karl Marx." In the latter she wrote, "To read Marx, one would think that it was only necessary to make a yard of cloth in order to create exchange value equal to the cost of production, together with a handsome surplus! In the weird Marxian world, where men are automatons, commodities have souls, money is incarnated life, and capital has a life process of its own! This idea of an 'automaton owner,' thus making profits without even being conscious of the existence of any desire to satisfy, is, to anyone who has lived with financial or industrial under-

takings, in its glaring discrepancies with fact, nothing less than grotesque." Thus she had reached a conclusion similar to that of the young Fabian, Sidney Webb, whom she had never met.

Her cousin, Charles Booth, had undertaken his great inquiry into the social conditions of London, later to be published as *Life and Labour of the People in London*. This investigation, carried on entirely at his own expense, and over a period of seventeen years, was perhaps the first scientific approach to the social conditions and life of the people in a metropolis. Her father's illness had become less acute, and it was now possible for her to spend four months of each year in London. She took an active part in Booth's survey and was elated when the *Nineteenth Century* carried an article covering her investigation. Subsequently, it published four articles under the title "Pages of a Work Girl's Diary." She had undertaken such employment as a part of the study. These studies in the East End of London "had revealed the physical misery and moral debasement following in the track of the rack-renting landlord and capitalist profit-maker in the swarming populations of the great centres of nineteenth-century commerce and industry." "I could see," she concludes, "no way out of the recurrent periods of inflation and depression—meaning, for the vast majority of the nation, alternate spells of overwork and unemployment—intensified, if not actually brought about by the speculative finance, manufacture and trading that was inspired by the mad rush to secure maximum profit for the minority who owned the instruments of production. Moreover, 'man does not live by bread alone'; and without some 'socialism'—for instance, public education and public health, public parks and public provisions for the aged and infirm,

open to all and paid for out of rates and taxes . . . even capitalist governments were reluctantly recognizing, though hardly fast enough to prevent race deterioration, that the regime of private property could not withstand revolution. This 'national minimum' of civilized existence, to be legally ensured for every citizen, was the second stage in my progress towards socialism." The girlhood realization that she belonged to a class that gave but did not execute orders was intensified. She saw that these manifold decisions were made without consideration of the "desires or needs of the multitude of lives which would, in fact, be governed by them; without, in short, any other consideration than that of the profit of the promoters." "There may be saints who can live unchanged in such an environment," she observes, "exactly as we know there are men and women who retain their moral refinement in a one-room tenement, inhabited by persons of both sexes and all ages; but the true born saint, whether rich or poor, is an uncommon variety of the human species. Such was the attitude of man toward man in the social environment in which I was reared."

With this background and as a result of research and experience, she was moving toward socialism. She writes, "What happened was that the time-spirit had, at last, seized me and compelled me to concentrate all my free energy in getting the training and the raw material for applied sociology; that is, for research into the constitution and working of social organization, with a view to bettering the life and labor of the people. . . . There was the current belief in the scientific method, in that intellectual synthesis of observation and experiment, hypothesis and verification, by means of which alone all mundane problems were to be solved. And added to this

belief in science was the consciousness of a new motive; the transference of the emotion of self-sacrificing service from God to man."

In her long struggle to discover the craft to which she was to give herself, she wrote, "There was one riddle in the application of the scientific method to human nature which continuously worried me, and which still leaves me doubtful. Can the objective method, pure and undefiled, be applied to human mentality: can you, for instance, observe, sufficiently correctly to forecast consequences, mental characteristics which you do not yourself possess?" Her devotion is revealed in a diary note: "The social reformer professes to be an uncompromising idealist; he solemnly declares he is working for the public weal. His whole authority, derived from public opinion, arises from the faith of the people in the honesty of purpose and strength of understanding. If he uses his mind to manipulate facts and twist them so that they shall serve his own personal interests, if the craving for power is greater than the desire for truth, he is a traitor to the society towards which he professes loyal service."

The period from her visit to Bacup in 1883 to the publication of her first contribution to Charles Booth's classic studies in 1887 was crucial. She writes, "Not that I wish to imply that research, still less my own investigation, into the cause and cure of poverty has yielded, as yet, results in any way commensurate with Sir Ronald Ross's researches into the origin and prevention of malaria. Still in its infancy, the science of society has barely reached the years of fruitful discovery. All I suggest is that the impulse of pity for the needless misery of men, as distinguished from the suffering of those individuals whom you happen to know, can be as

operative in the study of human nature in society as it is in that of the pestilential poisons besetting the human body."

It was in 1888, that J. J. Dent, at that time general secretary of a workingman's club and institute union, directed her attention to a group of very clever young men who with "astonishing energy and audacity" were speaking and writing, and reaching the minds of the workers. These were the young men of the Fabian Society. In October of 1889, a friend forwarded her a copy of the recently published Fabian essays. She read them from cover to cover, and in passing the volume on to J. C. Gray of the Co-operative Union, she wrote, "By far the most significant and interesting essay is the one by Sidney Webb; *he has the historic sense.*" The preceding spring, Sidney Webb had contributed a review of Charles Booth's first volume, published in the *Star*. In it, he observed that, "The only contributor with any literary talent is Miss Beatrice Potter."

She was engaged in preparing her book on the Co-operative Movement in Britain. She conferred with the historian W. E. Lecky, who sought in answer to her question, "Why was there no working-class association in these years of turmoil and change?" to give reasons why this was so. But he was not too helpful because it wasn't so. A young woman journalist gave her a lead. "Sidney Webb, one of the Fabian essayists is your man. He knows everything: When you go out for a walk with him, he literally pours out information." An interview was arranged, and he prepared a list of sources available at the British Museum, including the little-known Place manuscripts, various State trials, old Chartist periodicals and autobiographies of working-class agitators. The list was drafted "in a faultless handwriting and handed to me." A



few days later brought the first token of personal regard. It was a new pamphlet on the *Rate of Interest*. Thus began regular correspondence. Her diary of 1890 records, "Sidney Webb, the Socialist, dined here [Devonshire House Hotel] to meet the Booths, a remarkable little man with a huge head and a tiny body, a breadth of forehead quite sufficient to account for the encyclopedic character of his knowledge. . . . He is utterly disinterested, and is, I believe, genuine in his faith that collective control and collective administration will diminish, if not abolish poverty. . . ."

They attended the Glasgow Co-operative Congress together. "In the evening S. W. and I wandered through the Glasgow streets," she records. "A critical twenty-four hours, followed by another long walk by glorious sunset through crowded streets, knocking up against drunken Scots. With glory in the sky and hideous bestiality on the earth, two Socialists came to a working compact. 'You understand, you promise me, to realize that the chances are a hundred to one that nothing follows but friendship.'" A little later is this diary note: "A day out in Epping Forest. . . . 'Economics are still to be remade,' [he said.] 'Who is to do it? Either you must help me do it; or I must help you . . . ' We talked economics and politics and of the possibility of inspiring socialism with faith leading to works. He read me poetry, as we lay in the forest, Keats and Rossetti, and we parted."

She sent him the proofs of her forthcoming book on the Co-operative Movement. "I am disappointed," he wrote with commendable sincerity; "This book ought to have taken six weeks to write, not seven months. Why not let me help you do the investigation of Trade Unionism? Whilst you interview officials and attend Trade Union meetings, I can rush through

the reports and MS. minutes at the Trade Union offices.' ”

And then follows the remarkable suggestion, “One and one placed close together in a sufficiently integrated relationship makes not two but eleven.”

In the summer of 1891, they were betrothed. They kept it a secret because of her father's health and of the natural reaction to the fact a Potter had become a Socialist and was, in addition, to marry one. On July 7th, she enters this observation in her diary: “We are both of us second-rate minds; but we are curiously combined. I am the investigator and he the executant; between us we have a wide and various experience of men and affairs. We have also an unearned salary. These are unique circumstances. A considerable work should be the result if we use our combined talents with a deliberate and persistent purpose.”

Beatrice Webb concludes her extraordinary volume *My Apprenticeship* with the simple words, “On the first of January, 1892, my father died; and six months later we were married.”

Thus they met; and thus the partnership was begun.

#### IV

Sidney and Beatrice Webb lived together “in perfect partnership” for fifty-one years. These devoted scholars are chiefly responsible for the social reform that marks the passing of Britain from a capitalist empire to a socialist commonwealth. How did they exercise such transforming influence? In a generation cursed by violence and repudiation of democracy, the transition in England was characterized by peaceful change and democratic consent.

Two words, their own, describe the work of these scholars

in the realm of investigation and social action: Measurement and Publicity. Successful reform demanded, in addition, a threefold program of Principle, Permeation, and Practical Proposal.

In *A Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain* they write, "In industry no less than in political administration, the combination of measurement with publicity is today already undermining personal autocracy. The deliberate intensification of this searchlight of published knowledge, we regard as the cornerstone of successful Democracy." They conclude the volume with these words, "We want . . . to usher in a reign of 'Measurement and Publicity.' It is to a free democracy, inspired by the spirit of social service and illumined by ever-increasing knowledge, that we dedicate this book." Naturally, they were advocates of "gradualism" and in the chapter on "The Transitional Control of Profit-Making Enterprise" declared, "We do not foresee any sudden and simultaneous termination of the Capitalist System."

Their first great piece of research resulted in the monumental *History of Trade Unionism*. This was measurement on a grand scale. Sidney had been elected a member of the London County Council, and they faced the question is it "desirable to combine scientific research into social institutions with active participation in their operation," and had asked, "Is the professional administrator or legislator made more efficient or less efficient as such by being also a practised observer, reasoner and verifier in the domain in which he is temporarily an actor? Conversely, is the scientific investigator, concerned essentially to discover the truth about the working or development of a particular type of economic or political organization, rendered more likely or less likely to arrive at verifiable

conclusions because he finds himself temporarily 'behind the scenes', or at the very centre of the current activities of the social institution in question, by his membership of the elected authority, or his appointment to its executive staff?" Beatrice reached the conclusion, "I am disposed to think there is something to be said on each side of the question. But I suggest that, if the human unit in the case is not a single individual but an intimate and durable partnership, the balance is wholly in favour of the combination of purposes."

During the first six years of their married life, they were engaged in the historic inquiry into the British trade union movement and the publication of the *History of Trade Unionism* in 1894 and of *Industrial Democracy* in 1898. He was faithful in his administrative work on the London County Council, and as Chairman of the Technical Education Board. They gave themselves also to the formation of the London School of Economics and Political Science, and of course carried on their propaganda of Fabian collectivism. Beatrice describes their method of research or measurement: "Our plan of life was to spend eight or nine months of the year in our London home; working together in the morning at the book; Sidney devoting a long afternoon to the London County Council administration; the evenings, either alone together, browsing over periodicals and light literature, or discussing research, municipal administration or Fabian propaganda with friends and associates." The investigations involved conferences with the leaders of labor, attendance at labor conventions and other meetings, long painstaking reading of minutes, publications and other documents of the movement. The long summer recess of the Council gave opportunity for countryside-working upon material or visits to provincial towns for

investigations, and once every two or three years, usually after the publication of another volume, the treat of a Continental holiday.

After a visit to the old summer place of her father, Beatrice writes, "The first fortnight . . . we spent finishing the sixth chapter of our book, then Graham Wallas came, read our first chapter, and severely criticised the form of it. He made me feel rather desperate about its shortcomings. So I took it and wrestled with it: writing out a complete new syllabus with a quite different arrangement of the subject. This Sidney 'wrote to' with my help. Bernard Shaw came ten days after and stayed with us the remainder of our time working almost every morning at our book. The form of the first chapter satisfied him, and he altered only words and sentences. The second chapter he took more in hand and the third he has to a large extent remodelled. Sidney certainly has devoted friends. But then it is a common understanding with all these men that they use each other up when necessary."

Social reform, scientifically and democratically won, was a constant objective. She wrote in *Our Partnership*, "Those who sit down and think will, however, mould the form, though they will not set the pace or appear openly as the directors." They were both to think and to direct, but were at this period giving themselves more to measurement than to publicity and permeation. The objective is clear. "To discover the processes of social organisation, to observe and record the behaviour of man in society," she says, "had been my primary object in life; and it seemed to my cautious temperament that any pronounced views about social changes to be aimed at, might hamper these researches; partly because it might bias my own selection of facts and hypotheses, but also because

the way of discovery might be blocked by those who held contrary opinions. As years went by neither of these objections held good. I soon realised that complete detachment from current politics was impracticable unless you were indifferent to the public welfare, or had come to the conclusion that human society was beyond human control."

Wearry hours, inflexible resolve, rigorous discipline to maintain health in order to carry on research, are hinted in a brief word from *My Apprenticeship*: "There is the perpetual exercise of judgment—is it worthwhile reading this paper or that speech. The unsatisfactoriness of the decision, either way. If one does *not* read on, the fear that one has missed a suggestion or a fact of importance; if one persists, the aching eyes, the dreary sense of time and effort wasted, if the material turns out to be useless, theorizing, dreamy idealism or ill considered and patently inaccurate description." Elsewhere, she writes, "How much more highly one values accurate and vivid description, to subtle argument, and slashing logic. But even here, one is discouraged. The selection of facts is governed by the hypotheses of the investigator."

They carried the methods of the laboratory to the measurement of society, and from the research of scholars emerged the social reforms of statesmen.

The scientific nature of the approach is indicated in Beatrice Webb's essay "Personal Observation and Statistical Enquiry." She says, "There are two methods open to the student of the present state of society: statistical enquiry and personal observation. . . . Statistics are based on the assumption that as far as the question at issue is concerned all the units dealt with are equal. . . . In the statistics of population, of births, marriages, and deaths, all qualitative difference between one

individual and another or between one individual act and another is not only unimportant but is entirely irrelevant. . . . By personal observation . . . we understand the examination of individual men, acts, or circumstances with a view to discover the specific characteristics that distinguish them from other men, acts, or circumstances. Thus the striking difference between unit observation and mechanical enumeration is this, that, while mechanical enumeration simply notes the repeated existence of similar units, and could therefore be performed as efficiently by a machine as by a human being, unit observation demands that peculiar power of the human intellect—the discerning and registering of differences.” She defines statistical inquiry as “the *quantitative observation of aggregates* . . . personal observation as the *qualitative observation of units*.” In another article on the “Method of the Interview,” she declares, “The first condition of the successful use of the interview as an instrument of research is preparedness of the mind of the operator, . . . a familiarity with technical terms and a correct use of them. . . . Not to have read and mastered what your client has himself published on the question is not easily forgiven! The second condition is, of course, that the person interviewed should be in possession of experience or knowledge unknown to you. . . . The mind of the subordinate in any organization will yield richer deposits of fact than the mind of the principal.”

Referring to their later work that led to the complete transformation of the administration of the Poor Law, Beatrice writes, “We are hammering out our conclusions and throwing them at the head of the public in the form of massive historical analysis. It is time, we think, for big artillery in the way of books. But hard thinking takes time. For a whole month I

played about with propositions and arguments, submitting them, one after another, to Sidney, before we jointly discovered our own principles of poor law administration. And each of the services will have to be taken up in the same exhaustive manner! How could we do it, if working together were not, in itself, delightful? It is a curious process this joint thinking: we throw the ball of thought one to the other, each one of us resting, judging, inventing in turn. And we are not satisfied until the conclusion satisfies completely and finally both minds. It is interesting too, to note that we never discover our principles until after we have gone through the whole labour, not only of collecting, classifying and marshalling our facts, but of sitting down in front of them, until we discover some series of hypotheses which accounts for all the facts. . . . I do most of this experimentation, and Sidney watches and judges of the results, accepting some, rejecting others. It is he who finds the formula that best expresses our conclusions." They found the disciplined life delightful, four hours in the morning at research and thought, then when in the country or at the shore, a walk or rarely a ride, then a quiet "read" of eighteenth century literature. She got through two or three such volumes and a few novels, but Sidney she reports devoured fifty or sixty books. "While I spend four whole mornings in mastering the contents of one little book, Sidney will get through some eight or ten volumes bearing on local government, or likely to contain out of the way reference to it. . . : The continuous activity of his brain is marvelous," she records with pride. "Unless he is downright ill, he is never without a book or a pen in his hand. . . . If I would let him, he would read through meal time. A woman who wanted a husband to spend hours talking to her, or listen-



ing to her chit-chat, would find him a trying husband. As it is, we exactly suit each other's habits."

Later she remarks, "For the best intellectual effort of which a given brain is capable, I suggest two habits of body are needful—abstinence in indulging appetites and the trick of complete relaxation of muscle and obliviousness of mind. With these two habits, you can get the greatest output of mental energy of which your particular brain is capable. And, with John Stuart Mill, I am inclined to think that the exercise of the intellect—perhaps suffused with love—is the highest happiness of which we poor mortals are capable."

And so in the little home at 41 Grosvenor Road, London, and in the expeditions to the fields, they measured trade unionism in England. Their book gave publicity to their studies. Krupskaya, Lenin's widow, referring to their exile in Siberia writes in *Memories of Lenin*, "Vladimir Ilyitch and I set to and translated the Webbs which Struve had obtained for us." *The History of Trade Unionism and Industrial Democracy* were translated into seventeen languages. These volumes brought the life of the worker to the mind of Britain. Beatrice's diary is the record of unflagging zeal and sacrifice, "I have drudged in offices on records, or trudged to interview after interview. The work is stupendous, and, as yet, the material does not shape itself. I do little but work and sleep and work again. My fingers, cramped with hours of note-taking, threaten revolt, and my brain whirls with constitutions, executives, general councils, delegate meetings, district delegates, branches, lodges, socials, with objections to piecework and 'subbing,' demarkation, disputes—until all the organs in my body and my mind threaten to form into one federated trade union and strike against the despotism of the will."

There were contemporaries who could not understand the value that lay in such labor. The *Times*, however, described *Industrial Democracy* as a "permanent contribution to the sum of human knowledge," and as a "monument of research and full of candor . . . indispensable to every publicist and politician." These volumes set a new standard for social research. They made it clear that the trade unions, as organizations of producers, in all probability play a permanent role in society. This countered the orthodox Marxian view. In the preface to the *History of Trade Unionism*, Sidney and Beatrice Webb insist that "In spite of all the pleas of modern historians for less history of the actions of government, and more descriptions of the manners and customs of the governed, it remains true that history, however it may relieve and enliven itself with descriptions of the manners and morals of the people, must, if it is to be history at all, follow the course of continuous organization. The history of a perfectly democratic state would be at once a history of a government and of a people. The history of Trade Unionism is the history of a State within our State, and one so jealously democratic that to know it well is to know the English working man as no reader of middle class histories can know him."

It was research, measurement, dedication of this sort that contributed to the creation of a science of society; patient, persistent study, astonishingly extensive, pursued throughout their lives, resulting in minority opinions for royal commissions, commanding historical studies such as that of *English Local Government* published in ten volumes, concluded at last with their study of *Soviet Communism*. Research was the basis of reform.

They served on important royal commissions. As a member

of the Poor Law Commission, she lifted the report from the commonplace to a document that became a summons to the nation. It called for the removal of the evils of a class-ridden society. He was a member of the Royal Coal Commission. He was chiefly responsible for the reforms in the educational system of London. In his eighteen years of service on the London County Council, the educational system was developed into one of the greatest educational authorities in the world. The Education Act of 1903 was written for Balfour by Sidney Webb. The plans for the Labor Party became the policy of government and a civil clerk who had begun in the Colonial Office became the Colonial Secretary, a member of the Cabinet in a Labor Government. Because his party believed he was needed in the House of Lords, he consented to serve. Mrs. Webb refused to take the title of Lady Passfield. But she could write proudly, "Ten years ago, Sidney could no more have influenced the teaching of economics and political science in London than he could have directed the policy of the Cabinet. But now no one can resist him! He wields the L. C. C. [London County Council] power of making grants, he is the head of the one live institution; he is, on his own subjects, supreme on the University Senate (because he is thought to have the London County Council behind him), and he knows every rope and has quick and immediate access to every person of influence. Somehow I doubt whether such a state of things is quite wholesome; of course, one believes that in this case the hidden hand is beneficent and efficient!"

In their public service they faced a perplexing, not to say moral question. When individuals begin to support concrete measures, since no measure is perfect, the issue arises, Should

the weaknesses be brought out by the proponents of the measure? She writes, "As a matter of fact, with regard to administrative work, we plunge without hesitation on to the position of an advocate pledged only to display the arguments which tell in favour of the cause we believe in. In our scientific work, however, we honestly seek to tell the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth; a distinction in standard which puzzles and perplexes me."

He entered Parliament in 1922 and remained in active politics until 1931. The major part of 1924, he was President of the Board of Trade. Upon becoming a member of the House of Lords, he took the title of Lord Passfield. As Secretary of State, he was not successful. Perhaps the problem of making decisions was one less his forte than that of preparing the extraordinary memoranda upon which men better qualified for decision making could act.

Research resulted in the discovery of principle. The facts of research were publicized, and the principles found life in plans and programs. They discovered that the results of measurement and the discovery of principle must be brought to the attention of key personalities in positions of power. This led to the practice of permeation, that is, to permeate society with principle through the deliberate cultivation of persons moving to positions of great influence and of persons already holding posts of responsibility. They entertained such persons as Lloyd George and Winston Churchill, Haldane and Balfour. Almost every week, they gave dinners to eight or ten. Beatrice refers to three dinners and two evening parties at one house in eight days as "severe." Among those present were John Burns, the Shaws, H. G. Wells, and Asquith. Asquith, she said was "simply dull. He eats and

drinks too much and lives in too enervating a social atmosphere to have either strenuousness or spontaneity. . . . He has resigned himself to missing leadership." Sir Edward Grey, Wilberforce, and scores of younger men came under their influence. The purpose of these meetings was to bring to the attention of the influential the ideas the Webbs sponsored, buttress these ideas with irrefutable facts, quicken sympathy for their reception.

In her diary of 1898, Beatrice writes, "We can now feel assured that, with the school [The London School of Economics] as a teaching body, the Fabian Society as a propagandist organisation, the L. C. C. Progressives as an object lesson in election success, our books as the only elaborate and original work in economic fact and theory, no young man or woman who is anxious to study or to work in public affairs can fail to come under our influence." What appears a lack of modesty is but the honest statement of a person sworn to report facts as they are. The next year she notes, "We are sought but do not seek—the most agreeable way of seeing people. Not that 'society' pays us continuous attention: we are only casually found out by people belonging to the great world—we live in a pleasanter backwater of our own." On November 15th, 1899, she writes, "I took the Prime Minister [Arthur Balfour] in to dinner! I say 'took in' because he was so obviously delivered into my hands by my kindly hostess who wished me to make as much use as possible of the one and a quarter hours he had free from the House. . . . I set myself to amuse and interest him, but seized every opportunity to insinuate sound doctrine and information as to the position of London education. Sidney says I managed skillfully, but he is a partial judge!" Referring to a dinner given by

Asquith's: "Large, garish rooms, the flunkeys and the superlatively good dinner." She notes the ladies, "very décolletée, highly adorned with jewels, . . . the conversation aimed at brilliancy. We might have all been characters brought on to illustrate the ways of modern society—a twentieth-century Sheridan's play. They were all gushing over G.B.S., and I had to entertain the ladies after dinner with a discourse on his philosophy and personality—mostly the latter. We came away feeling half-flattered that we had been asked, half-contemptuous of ourselves for having gone. And not pleased with the entourage of a democratic Minister."

Another view of permeation is seen in her advice to Sidney, "If Sidney is inside the *clique*, he will have a better chance of permeating its activities than by standing aloof as a superior person and scolding at them. So I am inclined to advise him to throw in his lot with them in the days of their adversity and trial, when an addition to their ranks from the democratic side is of great value to them. Half the art of effective living consists of giving yourself to those who need you most and at the time of their most pressing want." Or again, when the educational reforms were pending, Beatrice writes, "Going to open an educationist address book of persons likely to be useful in that sphere. I must *organise* our contacts with them—we must learn the facts ourselves and spread our own ideas." Another entry of a not too successful meeting is nonetheless interesting: "A little group of a half-a-dozen Cambridge men—Hugh Dalton, Rupert Brooke, James Strachey, Clifford Allen, Foss—came for a week, and Clifford Allen has stayed on as our guest."

Of course permeation raised an important question, "How much sacrifice of personal efficiency to personal influence" is

justified. She knew that "In England, all power to establish new undertakings rests on your influence over the various ruling cliques. . . . On the other hand, your power for good depends, in the long run, on the quality of your special products; and this last depends on the whole-hearted devotion to your subject." Beatrice was singularly gifted for this work. She loved to work with people, genuinely liked fellow-mortals, enjoyed interesting them and inspiring them. And she once added, "Also, I enjoy leadership."

But a policy of permeation is fraught with danger. A. G. Gardner in *Pillars of Society* says, "There is nothing that men dislike so much as being 'managed.' And Mr. and Mrs. Webb are always 'managing' you. They sit behind the scenes, touching buttons, pulling wires, making the figures on the stage dance to their rhythms. To their modest table come the great and powerful to learn their lessons, and to be coached up in their facts. Some fear to enter that parlour of incantations, and watch the Webbs with unsleeping hostility. A mere suspicion that they are prompting behind the curtain is enough to make them damn the most perfect play." And even the Webbs had to learn that "you cannot at one and the same time exercise behind-the-scenes influence over statesmen, civil servants and newspaper editors, while you yourself engage in public propaganda of projects which these eminent ones may view with hostility or suspicion."

Measurement, Publicity, Principle, Permeation, Program. With these tools they fashioned the social reform that is contemporary Britain. Thus they worked, and history is yet to pass judgment on their labor.

## V

What were their essential ideas? In *A Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain*, they wrote: "Under the Capitalist System, the government of industry is vested in the hands of a relatively small fraction of a community, namely, the private owners of the instruments of production.

"This Dictatorship of the Capitalist is directed fundamentally to one end—the extraction of the largest attainable income for the owners of the land and capital in the form of interest, profit and rent. . . . But the central wrong of the Capitalist System is neither the poverty of the poor nor the riches of the rich: it is the power which the mere ownership of the instruments of production gives to a relatively small section of the community over the actions of their fellow-citizens and over the mental and physical environment of successive generations. Under such a system personal freedom becomes, for large masses of the people, little better than a mockery. . . . What the Socialist aims at is the substitution, for this Dictatorship of the Capitalist, of a government of the people, by the people, and for the people, in all the industries and services by which the people live." "What has to be decided, though it may not be explicitly formulated is, what kind of social order, what kind of civilisation, it is desired and intended that the community of the future shall be. . . . Do we prefer a universally educated people closely approximating to economic equality, or a society of grades and layers, highly differentiated in degrees of culture and amounts of wealth; a predominantly urban or a predominantly rural existence; an overwhelmingly commercial or a principally manufacturing population."

They were reared in and were convinced advocates of



democracy. The factor of consent was basic in their thought. They said, "This consciousness of consent and this feeling of security rests on the assumption that, if men and women have to live together, the convenience must be consulted, not of any minority, but of all of them; that where there is a difference of opinion, the minority must temporarily give way. Or, to put it in another way, there must be no inherently privileged class." It was natural, therefore, in their sympathetic investigation of Russia they should point out vigorously in *The Truth About Soviet Russia*, "There is, however, a type of suppression of free thought by word and by writ that is absent from capitalist democracy but is indisputably present in the USSR. No criticism of the living philosophy of the Communist Party is permitted in the Soviet Union. It would, for instance, be impossible to issue a stream of pamphlets against Soviet Communism and in favor of the capitalist system, such as the Fabian Tracts for Socialists, or the works of G. D. H. Cole and Harold Laski, criticizing capitalism and suggesting various forms of socialist organization; it would be still more impossible to publish a condemnation of Soviet Communism such as the Webb's 'The Decay of Capitalist Civilization.'" It is true that the Webbs, studying Soviet Communism prior to the publication of their comprehensive treatise entitled *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization*, saw values more difficult to discern in these days of waxing dictatorship and waning democracy. They said, "This fundamental transformation of the social order—the substitution of planned production for community consumption, instead of the capitalist profit-making of so-called 'Western Civilization'—seems to me so vital a change for the better, so conducive to the progress of humanity, virtue and wisdom, as to constitute

a new civilization." In pointing out that "the entire net product of the community is, in fact, shared among those who cooperate in its production, in whatever way they themselves decide, without tribute to an hereditary parasitic class" and that "this produces an emotional passion for production among the millions of workers by hand and by brain such as heretofore has only been manifested in other countries by the individual peasant proprietor or the profit-making entrepreneur" the Webbs do not deal with the proper question Is this but the socialization of the profit-motive? In the Preface to their extensive study of Soviet Communism, written in October, 1935, they say, "What we have sought to present is an objective view of the whole social order of the USSR as it exists today, with no more past history than is necessary for explanation, and with an intelligent impression of the direction in which it is travelling." Their work is descriptive, and even where more sympathetic than critical observers would agree today, is worthy of careful consideration in contemporary crisis. For instance, in the attempt to contrast Soviet civilization with Western civilization, they note "concentration of authority in a highly disciplined Vocation had had its drawbacks; there has been an atmosphere of fear among the intelligentsia, a succession, within the Party, of accusations and counter-accusations, a denial to dissentient leaders of freedom of combination for the promotion of their views, and among the less intelligent of the rank and file, no small amount of the chronic disease of orthodoxy." They were of the opinion that this "new civilization, with its abandonment of the incentive of profitmaking, its extinction of unemployment, its planned production for community consumption, and the consequent liquidation of the landlord and the capitalist" will spread. How,

when, where, with what modifications are questions they frankly said they could not answer.

They were of the democratic tradition and freedom was for them essential to the flowering of personality. "Looking back on a half-a-century of scientific investigation of public activity, it seems to us in retrospect that every discovery in sociology and, indeed, every increase in our own knowledge of social institutions has strengthened our faith that the further advance of human society is dependent upon a considerably further substitution of institutions based on public service for those based on profit-making." Earlier they had said, "What bound us together as associates was our common faith in a deliberately organized society: our common belief in the application of science to human relations with a view to betterment. . . . We staked our hopes on the organized working class, served and guided, it is true, by an elite of unassuming experts who would make no claim to superior social status but would content themselves with exercising the power inherent in superior knowledge and longer administrative experience."

"We repudiated the common assumption that socialism was necessarily bound up with insurrectionism, on the one hand, or utopianism, on the other, and we set to work to discover for ourselves and to teach others how practically to transform England into a social democratic commonwealth. . . ." The study of the co-operative movement led them to the conclusion that compulsory association of man as a citizen was demanded for much more than national defense and the maintenance of internal order. "We saw that to the Government alone could be entrusted the provision for future generations, to which neither producers nor consumers would

attend as such. Moreover, such obvious social utilities as public health and universal education, the provision for the destitute, the sick and the defectives, like that for the orphans and the aged—all of them based on provision according to need—involved enterprises to which no profit-making could usually be attached, and which were, for the most part, outside the characteristic activities or desires either of the associated consumers or of the associated producers. In short, we were led to the recognition of a new form of state, and one which may be called the ‘housekeeping state’, as distinguished from the ‘police state.’ This gave us a new vision of social development.” Their insistence upon publicity as well as measurement resulted not alone from study but from practical political experience. Following the Westminster vestry elections of 1894, Beatrice wrote, “You cannot trust a democracy without any provision for *full and effective publicity*. . . . The little tradesmen or working-men whom we were supporting were no better than their Tory fellows. If they had got elected without a strong leader they would have sunk to the same level of mean local feeling and petty jobbery.”

Beatrice had early made a discovery, as she termed it. “It seemed to me that, unless ‘the capitalist system’ was to destroy the body and soul of great masses of the wage-earners, it was imperative that ‘free competition’ should be controlled, not exceptionally or spasmodically, but universally, so as to ensure to every one a prescribed National Minimum of Civilized Life. This, in fact, was the meaning that Factory Acts, Public Education, Public Health and Trade Unionism had been empirically and imperfectly expressing.” She had rejected the fallacy propounded by her dear friend Herbert Spencer “that the system of profit-making enterprise with which we were

all familiar, belonged to the 'natural order of things,' whereas any activity on the part of the State or the municipality, or even of the Trade Union, such as factory acts, public health administration, compulsory schooling and standard rates of wages were 'artificial' contrivances; or, to use the philosopher's own words, 'clumsy mechanisms devised by political schemers to supersede the great laws of existence' and therefore bound—because they were 'against nature'—to be social failures."

Rejecting as they did Marxian economics, they accepted his theory of the historical development of profit-making capitalism. Their volumes *The Decay of Capitalist Civilization* and *A Constitution for the Socialist Commonwealth of Great Britain* were indictment and proposed reform. Exponents of "gradualism," grounded in the traditions of political freedom and pledged to the methods of science to achieve moral objectives, the Webbs of course rejected all forms of "insurrectionism" and the way of violence. Their research had convinced them that "there can be no permanence of social peace in a situation in which we abandon production to a tiny proportion of the population, who own the means of production, and yet give the workers the political power to enforce demands on the national income which capitalism has neither the ability nor the incentive to supply. This hopeless contradiction between the economic power of the few and the political power of the many" is the fundamental issue, and they found no solution save in the program now in force in Britain and the principles that underlie it.

## VI

Beatrice Webb was a woman of deep spiritual insight, who had given reverent consideration to religion and had come to possess some of its chief values. At one time she defined religion as "the communion of the soul with some righteousness *felt to be outside and above itself*." This communion, she believed, might take the conscious form of prayer, or "the unconscious form of ever-present and persisting aspirations—a faith, a hope and a devotion to a wholly disinterested purpose. It is this unconscious form of religion which lies at the base of all Sidney's activity," she continued. "He does not pray, as I often do, because he has not acquired so self-conscious a habit. But there is a look in his eyes when he patiently plods on through his own and other people's work, when he unwittingly gives up what other people prize, or when he quietly ignores the spite or prejudice of opponents, that tells of a faith and a hope in the *eventual* meaning of human life. . . . He refuses to put aspiration into words, because he would fear the untruth that might be expressed in those words. . . . But, for all that, he believes."

As early as 1879 she had written, "I cannot help having a half-conscious conviction that, if the human race is mortal, if its existence is without aim, if that existence is to end at however remote a period, in a complete dissolution, like that which overcomes the individual, then life itself is not worth living, not worth living to the mass of mankind." She studied Roman Catholicism with care and found in it a temptation to commit intellectual and moral suicide "to one whose life without a religious faith is unbearable." "The Protestant," she held, "declares virtually the supremacy of his own reason."

He asserts that his religion is rational and can be defended by arguments." But she believed that, "If he comes now into contact with modern science and modern philosophy, and is sincere in his search after truth, he must arrive ultimately at a moral and skeptical conclusion." Her study led her to hold that the Roman Catholic Church offers restoration of that harmony required to bring the intellectual and the emotional natures to understanding. The Church "declares herself to be the supreme reason. She does not ask you to interpret her; she provides her own interpreter in the priests, and suits her doctrine to the individual and the time. You do not renounce the authority of reason, but only of your individual reason, and this only on a question which it has already proved its incompetency to deal with to the satisfaction of the rest of your nature." But she resisted the temptation, as she put it, to "intellectual suicide" and came at last to believe that "religion is love; in no case is it logic . . . it is by prayer, by communion with an all-pervading spiritual force, that the soul of man discovers the purpose or goal of human endeavor, as distinguished from the means or process by which human beings may attain their ends. For science is bankrupt in deciding the destiny of man; she lends herself indifferently to the destroyer and to the preserver of life, to the hater and to the lover of mankind. Yet any avoidance of the scientific method in disentangling 'the order of things,' any reliance upon magic or mystical intuition in selecting the process by which to reach the chosen end, spells superstition and usually results in disaster. . . . It was the habit of prayer which enabled me to survive and to emerge relatively sound in body and sane in mind." This latter reference is to the crucial years when struggling to discover her life work, and

during which her mother died and her father suffered paralysis and death. "The two big forces for good in the world are the scientific method applied to the process of life," she affirms, "and the use of prayer in directing the purpose of life."

She saw the place of religion in the national life. "I desire that the national life should have its consciously religious side. If, as a state, we are purely nationalistic and selfish in our motives and aims, we shall degrade the lives of the individuals who compose the state. I should desire the church to become the home of national communal aspirations as well as of the endeavour of the individual towards a better personal life. Meanwhile, I prefer the present church, with all its faults, to blank materialism or competitive sectarianism."

"I cling to the thought that man will only evolve upward by the subordination of his physical desires and appetites to the intellectual and spiritual side of his nature. Unless this evolution be the purpose of the race, I despair—and wish only for the extinction of human consciousness. Without this hope—without this faith—I could not struggle on. It is this purpose, and this purpose only, that gives a meaning to the constantly recurring battles of good and evil within one's own nature—and to one's persistent endeavour to find the ways and means of combatting the evil habits of the mass of men. Oh! for a Church that would weld into one living force all who hold this faith, with the discipline and the consolations fitted to sustain their endeavour."

## VII

Two scholars set out to reform Britain. They sought nothing for themselves. It was indeed a "perfect partnership" as Prime Minister Atlee said. They lived simply and labored



prodigiously. Their researches discovered the data essential to the syntheses expressive of social principle. They served to the end that principle might be embodied in the institutions and practices requisite to freedom. It was the Churchill Government that conferred upon Lord Passfield the Order of Merit, not long after her death, a recognition of the social and political contribution of the partnership. Margaret Cole concludes her study of Beatrice Webb with these words, "A plain stone in Passfield Wood records the name of one of the greatest women of our generation." Bernard Shaw in youth had said, "the ablest man in England—Sidney Webb." Two scholars, a changed nation, reformers recognized in their own generation, prophets with honor, their ashes laid to rest in the most sacred shrine of an empire become a commonwealth.

Chapter II . . . . . The Minister as  
Social Reformer

## Walter Rauschenbusch

HE PRAYED "FOR A SHARE IN THE WORK OF REDEMPTION," AND his prayer was granted. He wrote a book that changed the thinking of American Christianity. His teaching, preaching, and writing summoned the religious forces of the nation for the regeneration of society. He was a good minister of Jesus Christ, a devoted professor of church history, but, above all, a humble man without fear, filled with "the prophet's scorn of tyranny, and with a Christ-like tenderness for the heavy laden and the down trodden." He gave to his generation a conception of the Kingdom of God so creative and so compelling that thousands fell to their knees to repeat his words, "Cast down the throne of Mammon, who ever grinds the life of men, and set up Thy throne, O Christ, for Thou didst die that men might live. Show Thy erring children at last the way from the City of Destruction to the City of Love, and fulfill the longings of the prophets of humanity. Our Master, once more we make thy faith our prayer: 'Thy Kingdom come! Thy will be done on earth!'"

### I

Walter Rauschenbusch was born October 4th, 1861, a little less than six months before Fort Sumter was fired upon. He

died July 25th, 1918, not quite four months before the guns of the First World War were silenced.

His social passion leaped artesian-like from the depths of a personal experience of Christ's redeeming love. Commenting on the Lord's Prayer, Rauschenbusch wrote, "When He bade us say 'Our Father,' Jesus spoke from the consciousness of human solidarity which was a matter of course in all His thinking. He compels us to clasp hands in spirit with all our brothers, and thus approach the Father together. This rules out selfish isolation in religion. Before God, no man stands alone. Before the All-Seeing, he is surrounded by the spiritual throng of all to whom he stands related, near and far, all whom he loves or hates, whom he serves or oppresses, whom he wrongs or saves. We are one with our fellow-man in all our needs. We are one in our sin and our salvation."

At seventeen, Walter Rauschenbusch experienced a deep and abiding religious change, at once so vital and so compelling that his personal relationship with God became the source of the power that sustained him as he struggled for the salvation of society. At the very heart of *Christianizing the Social Order* is this striking passage: "Spiritual regeneration is the most important fact in any life history. A living experience of God is the crowning knowledge attainable to a human mind. Each one of us needs the redemptive power of religion for his own sake, for on the tiny stage of the human soul all the vast tragedy of good and evil is reenacted. . . . In the best social order that is conceivable, men will still smolder with lust and ambition, and be lashed by hate and jealousy as with the whip of a slave driver. No material comfort and plenty can satisfy the restless soul in us and give us peace with ourselves. All who have made test of it agree that

religion alone holds the key to the ultimate meaning of life, and each of us must find his way into the inner mysteries alone. . . . Religion is eternal life in the midst of time and transcending time."

In "The Culture of the Spiritual Life" he wrote, "The main thing is to have God; and to live in Him; and to have Him live in us; to think His thoughts; to love what He loves and hate what He hates; to realize His presence; to feel His holiness, and be holy because He is holy; to feel His goodness in every blessing of our life, and even in its tribulations; to be happy and trustful; to join in the great purpose of God and to be lifted to greatness of vision and faith and hope with Him—that is the blessed life."

Rauschenbusch describes the development of his religious experience in simple, vivid terms: "And then, physically, came the time of awakening for me, when young manhood was coming on me, and I began to feel the stirring of human ambition within me; and what I said to myself was, 'I want to become a man; I want to be respected; and if I go on like this, I cannot have the respect of men.' This was my way of saying, 'I am out in the far country, and I want to go home to my country, and I do not want to tend hogs any longer.' And so I came to my Father, and I began to pray for help, and I got it. And I got my own religious experience." He speaks of that experience as "of everlasting value." "It turned me permanently," he adds. "It influenced my soul down to its depths."

He resolved to become a preacher. "I wanted to do hard work for God. Indeed, one of the great thoughts that came upon me was that I ought to follow Jesus Christ in my personal life and die over again His death. I felt that every Christian

ought to participate in the dying of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in that way help to redeem humanity. And it was that thought that gave my life its fundamental direction in the doing of Christian work."

Such was the change of his teens. Religion wrought further change. Its transforming nature is evidenced by the fact that it remained clear in his recollection to the very end. In a letter written shortly before his death, he said, "When I was leaving boyhood behind me, and the seriousness of life began to come over me, I felt the call of God, and, after a long struggle extending through several years, I submitted my will to His law. Henceforth, God was consciously present in my life, and this gave me a sense of solemnity and worth. . . . But this was only the beginning of my personal religion. . . . When I came to intellectual maturity, I had a second great struggle for salvation, perhaps of equal spiritual importance. During my theological education, I was confronted with the choice between the imposing authority of human traditions and the self-evidencing power of God's living word. The former offered a restful dependence on outward authority; the latter brought a never-ending quest for a holy light that always moves forward. This was the personal religious problem of faith applied to intellectual duty. I now had to lean back on the living spirit of God for support in my intellectual work, and felt his cooperation. This extended the area of personal religion in my life." He goes on to record, "Jesus has been to me the inexhaustible source of fresh impulses, life and courage," and to say, "It has been my deepest satisfaction to get evidence now and then that I have been able to help men to a new spiritual birth." He sums it up as he concludes the letter, "I have always regarded my public work as a form of

evangelism, which called for a deeper repentance and a new experience of God's salvation."

A third change was to come. It followed his preparation for the ministry. He had attended Pfafflin's private school in Rochester, and later spent one year in the Free Academy. He had been reared in a religious home of the orthodox German Baptist type, and had early learned to read the Bible, to pray, and to attend Sunday school and church, and to share in family worship. After the completion of his work in the Free Academy, he spent 1879 through 1883 in travel and study abroad. The family had previously spent four years in Germany, going over when Walter was but four years of age. This gave him background for the mastery of German on the second trip. He also mastered Latin, Greek, Hebrew, and French. He actually wrote letters to his parents in German script, English, Latin, and in Greek. It was a rich experience, and he, with deep love for art, met many artists, poets, and writers, visiting Dresden "to prosecute my study of art in the magnificent galleries there." In Leipzig, he listened to "the theological professors." One of his boyhood friends was Ed Hanna, later Archbishop Hanna. After attending service in a Roman Catholic Church, Rauschenbusch wrote, "I thought of Ed Hanna. You know he has become a priest now. . . . I wish I could take the Jesuit spectacles off his nose and take him around the world and make him see life as it is, instead of the caricatured image his teachers show him."

He took his senior year in the university and his first year in theology simultaneously, as well as work in zoology. In the summer of 1884, he served as a summer supply in a small Baptist church in Louisville. He thought the instruction given

the students there in the Seminary of poorer quality than that of Rochester. The people in Louisville apparently loved him, and wanted him to come back a second summer. He wrote, "The people here seem to be attracted to me, and I certainly am to them according to the mysterious law that we love those for whom we have had much trouble. . . . I had a chance to do something for others and I believe true happiness is proportioned to the degree of unselfishness which enters into any act or state. . . ."

His graduation thesis, used as a commencement oration, was entitled "The Ethics of Thinking." He said, "I believe that by far the greater number of thinkers err, not by rashness but by an excess of caution. They are convinced of the truth, and yet they keep it from those who ought also to be convinced of it. Some do it because wealth, position, and reputation are in the gift of the great masses and their leaders who rule the present but they are not found with the Christ who will rule the future. . . . Service now involves poverty, reproach, and that awful loneliness—the loneliness of thinking the thought alone among your brethren.

"Others shrink from speaking out the new truth because they dread the consequences, not for themselves, but for others. For what truth has ever been born into this world without agony? The new cannot live except by destroying the old. And as that crashes to the ground, it bears with it all the time-honored institutions resting upon it. . . . Today Christ comes not to bring peace, but the sword."

## II

Rauschenbusch graduated from the University of Rochester in 1884, from the German Department of the Rochester

Theological Seminary in 1885, and from the English Department in 1886.

He had planned to go to India as a missionary for the American Baptist Mission Society, but his professor in Old Testament and Hebrew questioned his liberal views, and he was rejected. He, therefore, became pastor of the Second German Church in New York City, taking up work on June 1, 1886, and remaining in the parish for eleven years. His training and experience were individualistic. He had no social program, but he did have eyes to see and ears to hear. He saw the grim triumvirate of poverty, disease, and crime stalk through the defenseless community. He wrote later concerning the origin of his social view: "It did not come from the church. It came from outside. It came through personal contact with poverty, and when I saw how men toiled all their life long, hard, toilsome lives, and at the end had almost nothing to show for it; how strong men begged for work and could not get it in hard times; how little children died—oh, the children's funerals! they gripped my heart—that was one of the things I always went away thinking about—why did the children have to die? . . . why, a single human incident of that sort is enough to set a great beacon fire burning, and to light up the whole world for you—if you only have the right mind in you." He had that mind, the mind of Christ, and fires burned that were to become beacons for millions in the years ahead. He continued, "In that way, gradually social information and social passion came to me."

He supported Henry George who was running for Mayor, and in a later record said, "I owe my first awakening to the world of social problems to the agitation of Henry George in 1886." He worked with Jacob Riis, and got playgrounds



for the community. But he was troubled. His religion was not big enough for the needs, he found. Winning one by one was right, he knew that, but the process did not change the social impact that played upon those won or yet to be won. The Gospel was for the individual. He knew that. But could it transform the social order? He saw that there was a biological heritage in sin, but became convinced there was a social carry-over. He sought some principle by which the needs of the individual and of the group could be met. He writes, "And then the idea of the Kingdom of God offered itself as the real solution for that problem."

He had been driven back to the Bible, and reached the conclusion that the views most men held on wealth were at variance with the teachings of the Book. In the New Testament he found the principles that confirmed his passion; they were the principles of Jesus. The Kingdom idea enthralled him. "Here was something so big that absolutely nothing that interested me was excluded from it. Was it a matter of personal religion? Why, the Kingdom of God begins with that. The powers of the Kingdom of God well up in the individual soul; that is where they are born, and that is where the starting point must necessarily be. Was it a matter of world-wide missions? Why, that is the Kingdom of God, isn't it—carrying it out to the boundaries of the earth. Was it a matter of getting justice for the working man? Is not justice a part of the Kingdom of God? Does not the Kingdom of God consist of this: that God's will shall be done on earth, even as it is now in heaven? And so, wherever I touched life, there was the Kingdom of God. That was the brilliancy, the splendor of that conception—it touches everything with re-

ligion; it carries God into everything that you do, and there is nothing else that does it in the same way."

His reading now includes such names as Richard T. Ely, Franklin H. Giddings, John A. Fitch, E. A. Ross, Graham Taylor, as well as Henry George, Tolstoy, Mazzini, John Spargo, John A. Ryan, Theodore Roosevelt, Thomas Jefferson, and many others.

It was in this period that deafness came upon him. In 1888, he suffered from Russian grippe, as it was then called, and, unfortunately, left the sickroom too soon, in order to carry on his parish work. He suffered a relapse, and became totally deaf. He was forced to learn how to read lips, but the affliction contributed to a certain shyness and sensitivity. Blest by a keen sense of humor, still he never overcame the heartache of this affliction.

In 1891, he made his third trip to Europe, and gave himself to the study of the teachings of Jesus and of sociology. He writes, "In the Alps, I have seen the summit of some great mountain come out of the clouds in the early morn and stand revealed in blazing purity. Its foot was still swathed in drifting mist; but I knew the mountain was there, and my soul rejoiced in it. So Christ's conception of the Kingdom of God came to me as a new revelation. Here was the idea and purpose that had dominated the mind of the Master Himself. All His teachings center about it. His life was given to it. His death was suffered for it. When a man has once seen that in the Gospels, he can never unsee it again. When the Kingdom of God dominated our landscape, the perspective of life shifted into a new alignment. I felt a new security in my social impulses. The spiritual authority of Jesus Christ would have been sufficient to offset the weight of all the doctors, and I

now knew that I had history on my side. But, in addition, I found that this new conception of the purpose of Christianity was strangely satisfying. It responded to all the old and all the new elements of my religious life. The saving of the lost, the teaching of the young, the pastoral care of the poor and frail, the quickening of star intellects, the study of the Bible, church union, political reform, the reorganization of the industrial system, international peace—it was all covered by the one aim of the reign of God on earth.”

As early as 1887, Rauschenbusch took up his pen in earnest. Purpose is the chief characteristic of his literary work. He seeks to share his discoveries, but back of the sharing lies an objective. He believed above everything else that if we would really seek the Kingdom of God and its righteousness, everything else would be added. His style is vivid, and filled with unusual figures of speech, simple and descriptive of the common life, with its suffering and sacrifice, its triumph and its tragedy. In his first paper that dealt with the social issue, a study of Henry George, he wrote, “The Jews were blinded by existing customs and the traditions of their fathers, and they rejected Christ. Let us take heed lest we too bow to that which *is*, and refuse allegiance to that which *ought to be*.”

In “Beneath the Glitter,” published in the *Christian Enquirer*, is this de Maupassant touch, “Why, yes, it is a pleasant evening. Out to see the life in New York City, eh? . . . There, do you see that big clothing house on the corner there? Brilliantly lighted. . . . But somewhere in that big house there’s a little bullet-headed tailor doubled up over the coat he is to alter. . . . He is choking down the sobs. . . . Why? Because his little girl is going to die tonight, and he can’t be there. Consumption, pulmonary. Been wasting away for

months, can't sleep except her head is on his breast. . . . Minnie is all the world to him. . . . How do I know? Just been there. She's whispering, 'Tell my papa to come.' But he'll not be there before one o'clock tonight. Saturday night, you know; very busy; sorry, but can't spare him. . . . You . . . say . . . ought to go home, permission or none; but that means throwing up a job that he has been hanging to by his finger nails. It will be six months before he gets another. And so he has to sew away and let his little girl die three blocks off. . . . Bored you, didn't I? Yes, guess I am something of a crank on these things."

This literary gift was developed, and climaxed in books that shook the very foundations of society, or, better, that became foundation stones for a new society. Chapter V of *Christianity and the Social Crisis* reveals Rauschenbusch at his greatest power, save only for the *Prayers of the Social Awakening* and the moving passages of "Unto Me," the address he gave to social workers. This chapter is entitled "The Present Crisis," and is prefaced by an imaginary picture of the centuries assembled and in conference. "When the nineteenth century died," he wrote, "its Spirit descended to the vaulted chamber of the past, where the Spirits of the dead Centuries sit on granite thrones together. When the new-comer entered, all turned toward him and the Spirit of the Eighteenth Century spoke: 'Tell thy tale, brother. Give us word of the human kind we left to thee.'

"I am the Spirit of the Wonderful Century. I gave man the mastery over nature. Discoveries and inventions, which lighted the black space of the past like lonely stars, have clustered in a Milky Way of radiance under my rule. One man does by the touch of his hand what the toil of a thousand

slaves never did. Knowledge has unlocked the minds of wealth, and the hoarded wealth of to-day creates the vaster wealth of tomorrow. Man has escaped the slavery of Necessity and is free.

"I freed the thoughts of men. They face the facts and know. Their knowledge is common to all. The deeds of the East at eve are known in the West at morn. They send their whispers under the seas and across the clouds.

"I broke the chains of bigotry and despotism. I made men free and equal. Every man feels the worth of his manhood.

"I have touched the summit of history. I did for mankind what none of you did before. They are rich. They are wise. They are free.'

"The Spirits of the dead centuries sat silent, with troubled eyes. At last, the Spirit of the First Century spoke for all.

"We all spoke proudly when we came here in the flush of our own deeds, and thou more proudly than we all. But as we sit and think of what was before us, and what has come after us, shame and guilt bear down our pride. Your words sound as if the redemption of man had come at last. Has it come?

"You have made men rich. Tell us, is none in pain with hunger to-day, and none in fear of hunger for tomorrow? Do all children grow up fair of limb and trained for thought and action? Do none die before their time? Has the mastery of nature made men free to enjoy their lives and loves, and to live the higher life of the mind?

"You have made men wise. Are they wise or cunning? Have they learned to restrain their bodily passions? Have they learned to deal with their fellows in justice and love?

"You have set them free. Are there none, then, who toil

for others against their will? Are all men free to do the work they love best?

"‘You have made men one. Are there no barriers of class to keep man and maid apart? Does none rejoice in the cause that makes the many moan? Do men no longer spill the blood of men for their ambition and the sweat of men for their greed?’

"As the Spirit of the Nineteenth Century listened, his head sank to his breast.

"‘Your shame is already upon me. My great cities are as yours were. My millions live from hand to mouth. Those who toil the longest have least. My thousands sink exhausted before their days are half spent. My human wreckage multiplies. Class faces class in sullen distrust. Their freedom and knowledge has only made men keener to suffer. Give me a seat among you, and let me think why it has been so.’

"The others turned to the Spirit of the First Century, ‘Your promised redemption is long in coming.’

"‘But it will come,’ he replied."

His articles appeared in newspapers and religious journals, and in a little periodical published monthly called *For the Right*, which was founded in 1889 by Rauschenbusch and his associates, Elizabeth Post, J. E. Raymond, and Leighton Williams, and dedicated to "The advancement of that Kingdom in which wrong shall have no place, but Right shall reign forever more." They explicitly denied any attempt to reform society. . . . "But we do aim to point out the wrongs that men suffer, and the methods by which these wrongs can be righted." But it was social reform, and the voice of the church today as it summons men to repentance and to justice evidences the thoroughgoing nature of the reform.

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There was a timeless and a timely quality about his writing. It is the work of a mind historically trained and of a soul acquainted with the Eternal, but the moral law he proclaims is concentrated on the concrete issue, and his words explode with the devastating effect of a proximity shell. The older missiles were timed to explode at a certain moment, or upon striking the earth, with the result that if the range had been incorrectly estimated, the destructive effect was lost. In the proximity shell, a small radar set was installed and set to explode when the radar message indicated the shell was in contact with the target. A sentence of Rauschenbusch, propelled by moral indignation, was aimed at wrong, but, unlike heavier shells that describe a parabola and hit the earth to explode with damaging but not devastating effect, Rauschenbusch had the inner sensitivity of the proximity shell's radar, and when precisely over the target area exploded with a destructive power that left wrongdoing and social sinning in debris and ashes. There was a "Thou art the man" quality about his utterances. He knew the meaning of teaching by indirection, and was not unacquainted with the laws of growth, but he refused to quiet his conscience by justifying cowardice, when Mammon marched by, suggesting delay and recommending the calm facing of the issue and the dispassionate spirit of science, the placid attitudes of religion and the do-something-tomorrow but do-nothing-to-disturb-today, a method used by some men who never heard Jesus say, "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For ye devour widows' houses and, for a pretense, make long prayers: therefore ye shall receive the greater damnation. . . . Ye serpents, ye generation of vipers, how can ye escape the damnation of hell?"

One day he wrote, "We have been told that in one of the institutions on Blackwell's Island, this sign has been put up: 'It is a bad day for a young man when he first gets the idea that he can get a dollar without doing a dollar's worth of work for it.'" "Amen!" wrote Rauschenbusch, "It is a good motto in the proper place. Now will not some lover of man have a few hundred mottoes painted with these words: 'It is a bad day for a young man when he first gets the idea that he can get a million dollars without doing a million dollars worth of work for it.' Then let him distribute the signs downtown where they will do the most good."

Another illustration will suffice to indicate the power of his pen. In 1892, he contributed an article entitled "Pilate's Wash-Bowl" to *The Examiner*. "We all know the story of the Holy Grail." . . . he said, "The story of Pilate's Wash-Bowl is not so well known . . . and yet it has a more continuous history, a more persistent influence, and a more numerous and magnificent band of protectors and worshippers than the Holy Grail could ever boast." He makes clear who are the Knights of the Washbowl, "the statesman who suppresses principles because they might endanger the success of his party; the good citizen who will have nothing to do with politics; the editor who sees a righteous cause misrepresented, and says nothing because it might injure the circulation; the deacon who sees a clique undermining a pastor's position and dares not create a disturbance. . . ." He speaks of all of them as "using Pilate's Wash Bowl." "Listen! do you hear the splash of the water near you? The Devil is pouring it. Christ is going to Calvary again."

Rauschenbusch was a successful pastor, and the church grew under his leadership. It was day-by-day contact with



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human beings, caught up in the grip of an economic order that put things before men, the apathy of good people whose religion was selfishly personal and who poured the cooling waters into the washbowls of contemporary Pilates when social justice was involved, the ignorance of reformers who thought primarily of the stomach instead of the soul, and, above all, the insistent demand of the Kingdom concept and the still small voice of conscience that drove him to the larger service that was eventually to lead him to the forefront of the reformers of his day. His personal religious life was deepened as his social outlook was broadened. *For the Right* is full of thoughtful comment. "Most people look only to the renewal of the individual," he wrote. "Most social reformers look only to the renewal of society," he continued. "We believe that two factors make up the man, the inward and the outward, and so we work for the renewal and Christianization of the individual *and* of society.

"Most Christians demand a private life for God and leave business to the devil. Most social reformers demand justice for business life, in order that private life may be given to pleasure. We plead for self-sacrifice in private life, in order to achieve justice in business life; and for justice in business life that purity in private life may become possible.

"Most Christians say: Wait until all men are converted, then a perfect social order will be possible. Most social reformers say: Wait until we have a perfect social order, then all men will be good. We say: Go at both simultaneously; neither is possible without the other.

"They all say: Wait! We say: Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand."

Later, in similar strain, he said, "Most of the social reformers

claim that if only poverty and the fear of poverty could be abolished, men would cease to be grasping, selfish, overbearing and sensual. We do not see it so. . . .

"On the other hand, we differ from many Christian men and women [who] believe that if only men are personally converted, wrong and injustice will gradually disappear from the construction of society. It does not appear so to us. Revivals in the South were not directly followed by a general freeing of the slaves. Revivals in the North do not ease the pressure of competition in a community nor stop speculation in land."

In 1892, Rauschenbusch and his friends organized the Brotherhood of the Kingdom, one of the first organizations of social Christianity in this country. It sought to give spiritual fellowship to a small group of men who had experienced a social awakening akin to that of the prophets. In *Christianizing the Social Order*, Rauschenbusch describes the origin of this body, "A number of us, who were passing through the same molting process, organized the Brotherhood of the Kingdom, and dedicated ourselves to the task of 'restoring that idea in the thought of the Church and of realizing it in the world.' The organization has been too unselfish to become large, but it was a powerful support and stimulus in those early days of isolation." Among the aims of the Brotherhood were: "Every member shall, by his personal life, exemplify obedience to the ethics of Jesus. He shall propagate the thought of Jesus to the limits of his ability, in private conversation, by correspondence, and through pulpit, platform and press. He shall lay special stress on the social aims of Christianity, and shall endeavor to make Christ's teaching concerning wealth operative in the church. On the other hand, he shall take pains

to keep in contact with the common people, and to infuse the religious spirit into the efforts for social amelioration." There was a pledge of mutual help. "If necessary, they shall give their support to one another in public defense of the truth, and shall jealously guard the freedom of discussion for any man who is impelled by love of the truth to utter his thought."

Rauschenbusch elsewhere speaks of this movement in almost reverential terms. "It was the formation of a *new apostolate*, a holy chivalry of Christ that was in our minds."

In the period from his appointment as pastor to the German Baptist Church in New York to his appointment as professor at the Rochester Theological Seminary, Rauschenbusch's thought on the Kingdom of God developed and matured. It is central in his thinking, the source of his social emphasis, the driving force in his proposals for reform. In *The Social Principles of Jesus* he says, "The Kingdom of God is the highest good. The idea of God is the highest and most comprehensive conception in philosophy; the idea of the Kingdom of God is the highest and broadest idea in sociology and ethics. It is so high and broad that many find it hard even to grasp the idea. Just as a barbaric tribe of hunters or fishermen would find it impossible to comprehend the social coherence and the patriotism of a nation of a hundred millions, just as the narrow nationalist of today falls down intellectually and morally when he confronts world forces and relations: so we who are trained to think in terms of family and State give out when we are to treat the Kingdom of God as a reality. It takes faith of the intellect to comprehend a stage of evolution before it is reached. It takes faith of character to launch yourself toward a great moral goal before its tangible and profitable elements are within reach. It takes more moral

daring today than for a century past to believe in the re-emergence and final victory of God's social order. . . .

"Any man whose soul is kindled by the conception of the Kingdom of God is a real man. Whoever loves the idea must turn it into reality as far as life lets him. Whoever tries will suffer. But even if he suffers, he will be more blessed and more truly a man than he would be if he did not try. In seeking the Kingdom he realizes himself. 'He that loses his life for my sake shall find it.'"

Rauschenbusch insisted that, "The ideal of the Kingdom of God is not identified with any special social theory. It means justice, freedom, fraternity, labor, joy. Let each social system and movement show us what it can contribute, and we will weigh its claims. We want the old ideal defined in modern terms, in the terms of modern democracy, of the power machine, of international peace, and of evolutionary science. But we want it with the old religious faith and ardor, so we can pray for it."

Unsocial religion, like the desire for power and the overweaning love of property, was for him, evil. He said, "If evil is socialized, salvation must be socialized. The organization of the Christian Church is a recognition of the social factor in salvation. It is not enough to have God, Christ, and the Bible. A group is needed, organized on Christian principles and expressing the Christian spirit, which will assimilate the individual and gradually make him over into a citizen of the Kingdom of God." The individual sins in shame, save where the group approves the sin. When the group accepts alcoholic drinking, the drinker becomes a man of distinction. Where it is socially condemned, drinking is associated with the gutter.

## THE MINISTER AS SOCIAL REFORMER

The Kingdom ideal ruled him. When the Brotherhood of the Kingdom was organized, he said, "We desire to see the Kingdom of God once more the great object of Christian preaching; the inspiration of Christian hymnology; the enduring motive of the evangelistic and missionary work; the religious inspiration of social work; and the social outcome of religious inspiration; the object to which a Christian man surrenders his life, and, in that surrender, saves it to eternal life; the common object in which all religious bodies find their unity; the great synthesis in which the regeneration of the spirit, the enlightenment of the intellect, the development of the body, the form of the political life, the sanctification of industrial life, and all that concerns the redemption of human life shall be embraced."

In 1897, he accepted a professorship in the German Department of the Rochester Theological Seminary, charged with teaching Germans on the way to becoming Americans. It was more than an assignment to teach theology, because, in addition to New Testament interpretation, he taught natural science and civil government, and did some work in zoology and English. It is a story of excellent teaching, of continued research and broadening influence. The word that is used oftenest in describing his teaching is "luminous." In 1903, he became Professor of Church History, and held that post until his death. His social thought deepened, his articles and lectures attracted attention, and he accepted his obligations as a citizen in significant civic service. He was moving to the moment when his first book would mark a new course in American Christianity.

## III

*Christianity and the Social Crisis* was published in 1907. Rauschenbusch thought it might cost him his job. He was completely unprepared for the reception that followed.

Years later, a newspaper reporter took down almost in Rauschenbusch's words the story of the origin of that book. The report appeared in the Rochester *Democratic Chronicle*, January 25, 1913, following an informal talk by Rauschenbusch to a Sunday-school class. "I began to have a desire to write a book," he said. "I had six books in mind . . . but I didn't know which one to write. . . .

"I decided . . . to write a book on social questions for the the Lord Christ and the people. This was a dangerous book and I entered upon my task with fear and trembling. It was part of my Christian ministry, a religious book to me.

"Three times I started and each time I was compelled to stop in the middle on account of work. When I went back to my book, I found each time I had outgrown my book, so I discarded all three. Then came a time when I felt I was prepared to write. I was slow in carrying out my plan, but in the summer of 1905, I went with my family to Cananbaigua Lake, where I worked every day for six weeks, and got the book fairly well blocked out. Then I was compelled to leave it.

"The next summer I went to Canada. I expected to find that this book would suffer the same fate as the others, but it didn't, and in six weeks more I had finished it. I then sent it to the largest publishers in the country, and asked them if they wanted it. They said that they did and kept it, and printed it. I wrote the book with a lot of fear and trembling. I expected there would be a good deal of anger and resentment. I left

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for a year's study in Germany right after it appeared, and I heard only the echoes of its reception. I eagerly awaited the first newspaper comments on it, and, to my great astonishment, everybody was kind to it. Only a few 'damned' it."

He returned to New York famous. A great banquet was held in his honor at the Astor Hotel, and he was called upon to discuss the book. *Christianity and the Social Crisis* was translated into Finnish, Norwegian, French, Russian, Swedish, Japanese, and German. Rauschenbusch's work became heavy. His biographer, Dr. Sharpe records, "Thirteen sermons, forty-one lectures and papers, thirty-five addresses, in addition to a full load of teaching in a period of nine months—1908-09," and declared, "The great sought him out for counsel, among them Woodrow Wilson and David Lloyd George." He records a conference with Theodore Roosevelt, in which Rauschenbusch informed the President that many thoughtful persons believed socialism was coming in the United States. Roosevelt's answer was illuminating and characteristic, "Not so long as I am President, for I will sail the ship of State alongside the ship of Socialism, and I will take over everything that is good, and leave the bad. What will Socialism do then?" Rauschenbusch replied jocularly, "I suppose the ship of Socialism will sink, but it is no matter, if you really save the valuable cargo." He asked the President, "Do you purpose to write into the laws of the nation the social theories of socialism?" "Precisely that," replied the President, "at least insofar as those theories are wise and practicable for the nation's wellbeing." "If you do that," said Rauschenbusch, "you will go down in history as the wisest of our Presidents."

Dr. A. W. Beaven, a former President of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, wrote Mrs. Walter

Rauschenbusch in 1937, after there had been time enough to survey the contribution of this professor to religion and to reform: "It is clear, it seems to me, that the greatest single personal influence on the life and thought of the American Church in the last fifty years was exerted by Walter Rauschenbusch. Probably the three most influential men in American church history upon the thought of the church have been Jonathan Edwards, Horace Bushnell, and Walter Rauschenbusch."

"The Social Creed of the Churches," adopted first by the Methodist Episcopal Church, is dated 1908. The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America was founded in 1908, and Walter Rauschenbusch participated in its establishment. Sharpe concludes, "He not only taught history, he made history. The stream of American Christianity has broken from the 'old bottom' of individualism and has channeled a new course through the social bad lands of poverty, slums, excessive wealth, industrial inequity and economic injustice. Rauschenbusch changed both the emphases and the direction of American Protestantism. In that he brought the social implications of Christianity sharply into focus, he has influenced the whole Christian movement. Doubtless many details of his solution of the social problem will be altered through the coming years, but this much is certain, his fundamental theses and major presuppositions will continue to hold a dominant place in Christian thought. Already they have been written into the very constitution of the Christian movement."

He was called upon to deliver many lectures, among them important lectureships on great foundations, such as the Earl Lectures at the Pacific School of Religion, and the Merrick



Lectures at Ohio Wesleyan. These latter became the basis of his second book, *Christianizing the Social Order*.

On his European journey in 1907, he visited Sidney and Beatrice Webb, who interested him in "co-operatives" and in Fabian socialism. Rauschenbusch was a socialist, but the use of the term is misleading in his case. He never belonged to the Socialist party, and of course was not a materialist and therefore repudiated the philosophical materialism of Marx. He was a socialist in the sense that he believed the land and all natural resources that can become monopolies should be socialized and democratically managed for the benefit of the people. He saw "the menace to individual liberty in the schemes of socialism as promulgated by some socialist leaders." He regretted that socialism had emerged in a period when "naturalism and materialism was the popular philosophy of the intellectuals, and these elements were woven into the dogma of the new movement. Great movements always perpetuate the ideas current at the time they were in their fluid and formative state." He continues, "Socialism is the most solid and militant organization since Calvinism, and it is just as dogmatic. Thus we have the tragic fact that the most idealistic mass movement of modern times was committed at the outset to a materialistic philosophy, with which it has no essential connection, and every individual who comes under its influence and control is liable to be assimilated to its type of thought in religion as well as in economics."

As a historian and a scholar, Rauschenbusch in his address before the Labor Lyceum, at Rochester, February 24th, 1901, entitled "Dogmatic and Practical Socialism," refers to the Marxian analysis with a scholar's respect, but his over-all consideration is critical. He said, "Marx was especially exposed

to a temptation of reducing everything to a single cause, because, like most German philosophic thinkers of the first half of the nineteenth century, he had been trained in the philosophy and dialectics of Hegel." Rauschenbusch prods his audience of socialists. He refers to the dogmatic spirit that was all too present in the history of the church. "But the spirit that has been driven out of the church has gone about seeking a habitation, and has found it. If you want to find real dogmatism that has got the truth and can lay it all down for you, neatly arranged and all complete, you must go to Single Taxers and Socialists. I have noticed how little of the scientific spirit of open-mindedness there is here. The word 'scientific' is constantly used, but when the spirit is absent, the word is cant." He goes on to quote Mr. W. T. Brown, who had ridiculed the slogan "We must rally around our ideals" and who had declared, "We don't want to rally around our ideals; we want to rally around our class interests." Rauschenbusch cut the ground out from under such statements by saying, "You are constantly informed that this is a 'stomach question.' I tell you that if you could get that view to prevail, if you could establish it, that it is purely a matter of selfishness, and that the sense of justice, the ideal of brotherhood, the longing for a truer and nobler life count for nothing, you have cut the heart out of the social movement. You have turned one of the sublimest movements the world has ever seen into the squealing of a drove of pigs, where the rear pigs are trying to push away the front pigs and get their noses into the trough too. And you have infinitely lessened the chances of success."

Back in 1893, he had said, "The only power that can make

socialism succeed, if it is established, is religion." "It cannot work in an irreligious country."

Rauschenbusch did not summon men to socialism. He summoned them to the Kingdom of God. If the collective ownership and democratic management of the principal means of production, distribution, and exchange would contribute to the Kingdom, Rauschenbusch stood ready to support such measures. But they were to be tested in the light of the Kingdom ideal. He saw in the organization of labor a major contribution to the Kingdom ideal, as labor lifted the burdens from the backs of the workers, gave them a new sense of dignity, and introduced the democratic element into the work life. Thus, he was a consistent and creative supporter of labor unions. In season and out, in classroom and college chapel, before great religious convocations and legislative bodies, in civic service and literary contribution, in private conference with youth and leaders of state, he persistently stated and re-stated the Kingdom concept.

In 1910, he published his *Prayers of the Social Awakening*. Some of these prayers have already been incorporated in the rituals of the great communions. Rauschenbusch was first of all a man of religion. He was a technical scholar, and his researches reveal high competency in his chosen field. Whether contemporary scholarship will agree with Rauschenbusch's interpretation of how the Kingdom is to come is not a matter of concern, since his social gospel is not dependent upon his non-apocalyptic interpretation of Jesus and the Kingdom.

In *Christianity and the Social Crisis* he says, "No man is a Christian in the full sense of the original discipleship until he has made the Kingdom of God the controlling purpose of his life; and no man is intellectually prepared to understand

Jesus until he has understood the meaning of the Kingdom of God." Rauschenbusch interpreted the passage in Luke 17:20-21 which is usually rendered "The Kingdom of God is within you" as being properly translated "The Kingdom of God is among you." For him, it was the reign of God, not the realm of God. The Kingdom involved the progressive regeneration of all human affairs by the thought and spirit of Jesus. He held that the regeneration of society can come only through the act of God and the presence of Christ; but he insisted that God is now acting and that Christ is now here. He concludes, "Whatever argument would demand the postponement of social regeneration to a future era will equally demand the postponement of personal holiness to a future life."

In his *Social Principles of Jesus*, he laid down three basic considerations: life and personality are sacred; men stand or fall, spiritually, together; the strong must stand with the weak and defend their cause. The latter is, of course, another statement of the law of love. The Kingdom is founded upon these principles, and "implies a progressive reign of love in human affairs." It involves "the progressive unity of mankind, but with the maintenance of individual liberty."

His mind moves from worship to work, from the experience of Christ's love to the expression of that love. "Social Christianity is adding to the variety of Christian experience, and is creating a new type of Christian man who bears a striking family likeness to Jesus of Galilee." "These new religious emotions ought to find conscious and social expression." He bemoans the church as poverty stricken in hymns and prayers, and unable to strike "the triumphant chords of social hope" and says our liturgies are bereft of social thought and feeling. So he wrote his prayers "as an attempt in that direction."

They were written on trains and in the snatched moments of a busy life, but welled up from a rich spiritual reservoir. The subjects for the prayers are stimulating, perhaps a call to repentance: For Teachers, For All Mothers, For Discoverers and Inventors, For Kings and Magnates, For Women Who Toil, For the Children of the Street. In the prayer which he called "For the Idle," he prayed, "O God, we remember with pain and pity the thousands of our brothers and sisters who seek honest work and seek in vain. . . . We acknowledge our common guilt for the disorder of our industry which thrusts even willing workers into the degradation of idleness and want. . . . We remember also with sorrow and compassion the idle rich, who have vigor of body and mind and yet produce no useful thing. Forgive them for loading the burden of their support on the bent shoulders of the working world."

He moved from prayer to a consideration of profit. He said, "In so far as profit is only another name for the fair reward which society owes for useful labor and service, it has a sound moral basis, and we have no quarrel with it. But in so far as profit contains an ingredient which is gained without productive labor, at the expense of others, and without their willing consent, it rests on power and not on right, and a Christian man is under no obligation whatever to feel moral respect for it."

Thus from the professor's chair, from the pulpit, and from the platform, but primarily with the pen, this man who could not hear caused millions to hear. They heard the voice of the Hebrew prophets and of Jesus. His first and greatest book *Christianity and the Social Crisis* begins with a consideration of the historical roots of Christianity found in the sermons of the prophets. He then considered the social aims

of Jesus and the social impetus of early Christianity, and asked, "Why has Christianity never undertaken the work of social reconstruction?" and considers the limiting forces of a hostile empire, the other-worldliness, ascetism and monastic enthusiasms, sacramental and ritualistic superstitions, all derive from what he calls "contemporary drifts in heathen society." He notes the dogmatic bent resulting from Greek influence, and evaluates the menace that lies in the union of church and state. He tells us that early Christianity had no political rights and suffered the curse of despotism. But the democratic movement following the Reformation entered the church, and the intellectual atmosphere necessary to change emerged. "By great processes of self-purification the alien infusions in Christianity have been eliminated, and Christianity itself is being converted to Christ." He moves rapidly through the present crisis, considers the church and the social movement, and finally faces the question, What to do? It is a clear call to a new apostolate who will take the Kingdom of God ideal into their hearts, and move out to realize it among men, come cross or crown.

#### IV

Rauschenbusch knew that his social thought must be theologically undergirded. Thus came his last significant book, *A Theology for the Social Gospel*. It does not carry the fire of his first volume. Prophets experience a certain quenching of flame when they move from preaching to theologizing. He centers on the Kingdom of God: "Since God is in it, the Kingdom of God is always both present and future. Like God, it is in all tenses, eternal in the midst of time. It is the energy

of God realizing itself in human life. Its future lies among the mysteries of God."

Back in 1899, Rauschenbusch had written, "We need a theological basis for our social interests. Our present theology is individualistic. It deals with the salvation of the individual. Anything concerning the salvation of the race has to be added." Rauschenbusch was not a theologian, and so admitted in a letter to William Gay Balltine, January 24th, 1912. "I have to confess to you that I am not a theologian, and never shall be. . . . God and Christ may differ for my analytic intellect, but for my religious life they are convertible terms. The God of the stellar universe is a God in whom I drown. Christ with the face of Jesus I can comprehend, and love and assimilate. So I stick to Him, and call Him by that name. Let others do differently if they are differently made. . . . I prefer to superimpose the two concepts on each other, and get more out of each."

*A Theology for the Social Gospel* begins "We have a social gospel. We need a systematic theology large enough to match it and vital enough to back it. . . .

"If our theology is silent on social salvation, we compel college men and women, working men, and theological students to choose between an unsocial system of theology and an irreligious system of social salvation. It is not hard to predict the outcome. If we seek to keep Christian doctrine unchanged, we shall insure its abandonment." So the concepts of sin and salvation are enlarged to include social sin and social salvation.

## V

Brutal forces played upon him in the closing years of his

life. The War cut into his soul. He did not hold the absolute pacifist view, nor was he pro-German, but his historical and social knowledge, and his intellectual honesty forced him to speak with a frankness not easily tolerated in war. A sense of loneliness stole over him, and then came cancer and the certainty of death. As he neared the end, he wrote, "I leave my love to those friends whose souls have never grown dark against me. I forgive the others, and hate no man. For my errors and weaknesses, I hope to be forgiven by my fellows. I have long prayed God not to leave me stranded in a lonesome and useless old age, and if this is the meaning of my present illness, I shall take it as a loving mercy of God toward His servant. Since 1914, the world is full of hate, and I cannot expect to be happy again in my lifetime. I had hoped to write several books which had been in my mind, but doubtless others can do the work better. The only pang is to part from my loved ones, and no longer be able to stand by them and smooth their way. For the rest, I go gladly, for I have carried a heavy handicap for thirty years, and have worked hard."

These were listed as "Instructions in Case of My Death," and were for his beloved wife, Pauline Rother, a Milwaukee schoolteacher whom he had married in 1893, and for his five children. Honor had come to this prophet, and, of course, suffering. He had contributed a vital concept to the church and to Christianity. It was the idea of the Kingdom in which he brought together the personal and social meaning of Christianity in a splendid synthesis, and insisted, "The Kingdom is not only in heaven, but is to come on earth; that while it begins in the depths of the heart, it is not to stay there; that the church does not embrace all the forces of the Kingdom; that while the perfection of the Kingdom may be reserved



for a future epoch, the Kingdom is here and at work. The Kingdom means individual men and women, who freely do the will of God because they love it; who have fellowship with God, and who therefore live rightly with their fellow-men. And without a goodly number of such men and women, no plan for a higher social order will have stability enough to work. But the Kingdom also means a growing perfection in the collective life of humanity, in our laws, in the customs of society, in the institutions for education, and for the administration of mercy; in our public opinion, our literary and artistic ideals, in the pervasiveness of the sense of duty and in our readiness to give our life as a ransom for others." He called upon men to treat moral questions before they became political issues, and insisted that ministers must know social and economic fact.

Love for human beings is present in nearly every sentence he wrote. In his address to the social workers, published under the title, "Unto Me," he said, "We hold a human hand, but we feel God's life pulsing in it, if we know where to feel for the pulse. . . . We are never in doubt of the mystic value of a human being when it happens to be our own child. God isn't either."

He breaks down the artificial barrier between sacred and secular. "Wherever the Kingdom of God is a living reality in Christian thought, any advance toward social righteousness is seen as a part of redemption, and arouses inward joy and the triumphant sense of salvation."

He loved the church, and was one of its most courageous defenders; but he was consumed with the prophet's fear of over-institutionalizing dynamic ideas. "The Kingdom of God breeds prophets; the church breeds priests and theo-

logians." "The church runs to tradition and dogma; the Kingdom of God rejoices in forecasts and boundless horizons. The men who have contributed the most fruitful impulses to Christian thought have been men of prophetic vision, and their theology has proved most effective for future times when it has been concerned with past history, with present social problems, and the future of human society. The Kingdom of God is to theology what outdoor color and light are to art. It is impossible to estimate what inspirational impulses have been lost to theology and the church because it did not develop the doctrine of the Kingdom of God, and see the world and its redemption from that point of view." "The Kingdom of God is divine in its origin, progress, and consummation. It was initiated by Jesus Christ, in whom the prophetic spirit came to its consummation. It is sustained by the Holy Spirit, and it will be brought to its fulfilment by the power of God in his own time. . . . The Kingdom of God is humanity organized according to the will of God."

Occasionally in a simple sermon, an extemporaneous prayer, a pastoral call, the true nature of the man is found. This minister who was a social reformer, whose influence has permeated American church life and profoundly influenced the nation, once wrote a paraphrase of the Thirteenth Chapter of First Corinthians. It appeared in the little book called *Dare We Be Christians*, and in it we come to know Walter Rauschenbusch:

"If I create wealth beyond the dream of past ages and increase not love, my heat is the flush of fever and my success will deal death.

"Though I have foresight to locate the fountain of riches,

and power to pre-empt them, and skill to tap them, and have no loving vision for humanity, I am blind.

"Though I give of my profits to the poor and make princely endowments for those who toil for me, if I have no human fellowship of love with them my life is barren and doomed.

"Love is just and kind. Love is not greedy and covetous. Love exploits no one; it takes no unearned gain; it gives more than it gets. Love does not break down the lives of others to make wealth for itself; it makes wealth to build the life of all. Love seeks solidarity; it tolerates no divisions; it prefers equal workmates; it shares its efficiency. Love enriches all men, educates all men, gladdens all men.

"The values created by love never fail; but whether there are class privileges, they shall fail; whether there are millions gathered, they shall be scattered; and whether there are vested rights, they shall be abolished. For in the past strong men lorded it in ruthlessness and strove for their own power and pride, but when the perfect social order comes, the strong shall serve the common good. Before the sun of Christ brought in the dawn, men competed, and forced tribute from weakness, but when the full day shall come, they will work as mates in love, each for all and all for each. For now we see in the fog of selfishness, darkly, but then with social vision; now we see our fragmentary ends, but then we shall see the destinies of the race as God sees them. But now abideth honor, justice, and love, these three; and the greatest of these is love."

Chapter III . . . . . The Administrator as  
Social Reformer

*David E. Lilienthal*

"IT IS A TALE OF A WANDERING AND INCONSTANT RIVER NOW become a chain of broad and lovely lakes which people enjoy, and on which they can depend, in all seasons, for the movement of the barges of commerce that now nourish their business enterprises. It is a story of how waters once wasted and destructive have been controlled and now work, night and day, creating electric energy to lighten the burden of human drudgery. Here is a tale of fields grown old and barren with the years, which now are vigorous with new fertility, lying green to the sun; of forests that were hacked and despoiled, now protected and refreshed with strong young trees just starting on their slow road to maturity. It is a story of the people and how they have worked to create a new Valley."

These are words from one of the remarkable books of the century, a book that tells of faith beating back fear and of democracy laying hold upon science for the enrichment of personality. But it is more than that. It is the story of an administrator, whose democracy roots in the morality of the Hebrew prophets; whose love of the people is inspired by One whom the people heard gladly; an administrator ruled

by the principle that science shall be used democratically to achieve moral ends, who knows that the necessities of technology and the necessities of brotherhood must be reconciled. It is the story of David Lilienthal, the story of a man who has become great without knowing it, whose greatness was achieved by becoming a servant; modest, courageous, kind, realistic, amazingly capable, eschewing reformers' utopias, but realistically bringing utopias to pass, a man who is not out to reform but whose genius effects reform, not only in the realm of social change, but in the human heart.

He was but thirty-four when Franklin D. Roosevelt appointed him as one of the three directors of the Tennessee Valley Authority. He was forty-seven when appointed chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. The administrative ramifications of such offices are bewilderingly extensive. A man who is general manager of a department store, the superintendent of a school system or the president of a university, the executive in an automobile factory, or even a bishop speaks of his administrative responsibilities, often with that bowing of the shoulders supposed to suggest burdens grievous to be borne.

## I

David Lilienthal was charged with the administration of one of the greatest engineering and construction projects in the history of the world, in a territory about the size of England and Scotland, with a population of approximately 4,500,000. The over-all project involved the construction of twenty-one dams, the control of the Tennessee River and its tributaries, and their transformation into a water highway, the development of power, the application of scientific knowledge to the

problem of soil erosion and winning the co-operation of the people in restoring the once good earth to fertility, and the reforestation of the mountains. And these were but some of the many administrative tasks related to the engineering problem itself. Administration also included the whole question of public relations in the Valley and in the nation. The power corporations of the community in particular and of the country at large mobilized the newspapers they controlled, the "writers" bought and paid for, the politicians opposed to "plums" they could not eat, and sought to discredit the entire enterprise, sinking to a new low of misrepresentation. Administration called for proper relations with the President, the Congress, the states, and municipalities, as well as the countless private organizations affected by the program. There were labor relations, too—tens of thousands of workers toiled through the heat of summer and the cold of winter. There was never a strike against that administration. These workers cleared more than 175,000 acres of land, now covered by the lakes. They relocated 1,200 miles of highway, and nearly 140 miles of railroad. They excavated 30 million cubic yards of rock and earth in making ready for the foundations of the dams. Lilienthal speaks of the Tennessee River as "an idle giant and a destructive one." To shackle such a giant, the men of the TVA poured 113 million cubic yards of concrete, rock fill, and earth. Let the administrator speak: "To comprehend these figures requires a few comparisons. This 113 million cubic yards of material is more than twelve times the bulk of the seven great pyramids of Egypt. Of these materials, the concrete alone poured into the TVA dams is two and a half times as much as used in all the locks and structures of the Panama Canal; is four times as much as in Boulder Dam,

1,200,000 cubic yards greater than the Grand Coulee Dam; would build more than seven dams as large as Soviet Russia's great Dnieprostroy Dam." Boulder was five years in building, and took the combined efforts of six of America's largest building contractor firms. Grand Coulee took eight years and ten construction firms. But TVA built all of its dams. Thirty-five Boulder dams or ten Grand Coulee dams could have been built with the total materials required for TVA. The staff in 1942 were designing and building a dozen dams and improving four others, as well as erecting the South's largest steam electric plant, and building large chemical and munition factories. There were 40,000 men and women at work.

The deep water courses of the river made navigable carried 161 million ton-miles of traffic as against 46 million ton-miles of traffic in 1928, and the savings to shippers ran into many millions of dollars. New towns were built, and old towns came to life. This is not a complete picture of the administrator's labor.

The formulation of policy that must be preceded by the drafting of guiding principles, the day-by-day adjustment of concrete situation to over-all plan, the problems of housing people, new people, and people whose homes were of necessity moved, the unnumbered decisions at lower levels involving human beings but making or breaking the administrator charged with general decision, keeping the spirit and practice democratic, and, at the same time, drawing out the best of every worker by winning his co-operation rather than coercing his spirit, and, through it all, to demonstrate to men of little faith that right dealing is more efficient in straight dollars and cents—all this, and much more, were a part of administration in the TVA.

Lilienthal could say, "Here men and science and organizing skills applied to the resources of waters, land, forests, and minerals have yielded great benefits for the people; and it is just such fruits of technology and resources that people all over the world will, more and more, demand for themselves. That people believe these things can be theirs—this it is that constitutes the real revolution of our time, the dominant political fact of the generation that lies ahead. No longer do men look upon poverty as inevitable, nor think that drudgery, disease, filth, famine, floods, and physical exhaustion are visitations of the devil or punishment by a deity. . . . Our faith is sustained by the inspiring words of great leadership, by the pledges of freedom and prosperity and democracy. But it is when the words unbend—when they come into men's homes, to their farms, their shops—that they come alive to men."

This administrator caused words to unbend. They did enter the homes of the people. Light shone upon their faces, and courage lived in their hearts. The floods that were a yearly threat became history, and the river a highway. With full respect for the Scriptures, when the purpose that underlies this great effort is known, the river, had indeed become a highway for our God. The farmhouse was changed. Fifty million seedling trees took root. Erosion was halted, the soil comes back, and there is a new soul in the Valley. And the whole project has been developed without the control of a distant bureaucracy, without political favoritism, without misappropriation of funds—in a word, honestly, democratically, for the common good. Yes, he is an administrator.

And now comes an administrative assignment even greater, one in which the future of man is involved—the control and better use of atomic power. The American people have



invested more than three billion dollars in this enterprise, expending 528 million dollars in 1948. This is a story that cannot be summarized. In it lies our national security, and perhaps the survival of civilization. It is a tale of research, of exploration, of vast production centers, of relations with biology and medicine, the production of weapons, of necessary security and the danger to freedom as well as to creative research that lies therein; a story of faith and of fear, of possible benevolence or of undreamed malevolence. Before me, as I write, lies the Fourth Annual Report, and on it the inscription, "Bishop Oxnam: I hope you will find some of this as heartening as I do—e.g. p. 5, *et seq.* David E. Lilienthal." Page 5 begins with the sentence, "Isotopes for scientific, medical, agricultural, and industrial use constitute the first great contribution of the development of atomic energy to peacetime welfare." Farther down on the page is this striking word, "For the first time, it becomes possible to follow in intimate detail nature's fundamental processes—such processes as: photosynthesis, in which green plants use energy from the sun to form sugar, starch, cellulose, and other energy-containing carbon compounds used by man; metabolism, in which some of these carbon compounds, taken into the body as food, give the sun's energy to the living cells. . . . They will help man to adapt his environment to his needs."

## II

What manner of man is this administrator?

When he served as chairman of the committee that prepared the now famous Acheson-Lilienthal Report for the International Control of Atomic Energy, he telephoned me one day, and asked, "Would it be possible to talk this question over

with a group of religious leaders? There are spiritual issues involved here, and I covet counsel." A group of twenty representative men of religion assembled one afternoon in my office, and listened quietly as this man calmly outlined the problem and the proposed answer, and with the eagerness of a young student, he awaited such answers as might be forthcoming. Some time after that, he suggested a breakfast meeting. It has been hard for a man who loves the out-of-doors, horseback riding and friends about him to accustom himself to the necessary security precautions of his high office. I had hardly sat down for breakfast in his hotel room before there was a knock on the door. With a slight frown, he explained the interruption. "My keeper," he said. Of course, such protection is necessary, and he bows to it, but not gladly. He talked for a moment about the dearth of books from religious or political leaders that might guide him in facing the moral responsibilities related to the control of this great power now in the hands of the American people. "I face a moral problem," he said. "Not a personal but a social moral problem. It is the problem of an administrator with a conscience." His words came slowly. At times, I thought he had stopped talking, but they followed, and built sentences crystal clear. Archibald Macleish got the impression of "spoken thoughts" when he interviewed Lilienthal. That is a penetrating observation. Lilienthal thinks when he speaks, and his thought is grounded deep in religious and moral considerations. "Some tell me there is no problem. An administrator is not charged with moral decision. Such decisions are made by the policy-forming body that framed the charter that governs the administrator. But I cannot see it that way. I refuse to think of the administrator as one who pulls the crank on a

colossal adding machine. I know that the total that appears is determined not by pulling the crank but by punching the keys. There is a moral obligation to punch the right keys." He thought for a time, and then said, "I have authority to appoint advisory committees. I have the advice of the ablest men of science. Similarly, I have a committee of the foremost men of medicine. Do you think I could have a spiritual advisory committee, composed of men of all faiths who have given themselves to the life of the Spirit?" This man knows that decisions concerning the nature of man and the purpose of society determine the course of centuries. It proved later that there were some very real difficulties in the way of securing such a committee, questions that involved separation of church and state, problems that emerged from sectarianism, and other considerations. But Lilienthal is persistent, and will find a way to secure the help he needs. That he understands the deeper issues clearly is revealed in his addresses and writings. He knows men's lives can be changed. He saw them changed in the Tennessee Valley. "I do not, of course, believe that when men change their physical environment they are inevitably happier or better. The machine that frees a man's back of drudgery does not thereby make his spirit free. Technology has made us more productive, but it does not necessarily enrich our lives. Engineers can build us great dams, but only great people make a valley great. There is no technology of goodness. Men must make themselves spiritually free. . . . A Tennessee Valley farm wife who now has an electric pump that brings water into her kitchen may or may not be more generous a spirit, less selfish, than when she was forced to carry her water from the spring day after day."

But deep in his heart is a faith in the essential goodness of

humanity, that on balance the good outweighs the evil. Democracy rests on this belief. "The rock upon which all these efforts rest is a faith in human beings."

He agrees with the Chinese philosopher Hu Shih that a civilization limited by and unable to overcome matter is more materialistic than one that frees man from such limitations and releases the human spirit. He, like Rauschenbusch, in his conception of the Kingdom of God, sees in all such activities contribution to the reign of God on earth, and, therefore, the "dreamers with shovels" are thinking God's thoughts after him. He is at the task of answering the prayer, "Thy will be done on earth as it is heaven." But he does not forget the salutation, "Our Father" and its affirmation of the solidarity of the human family. Thus he refuses the way of benevolent compulsion by "democrats" who know what is good for the people and superimpose their plans upon the poor, whom they believe will after a time recognize that their benefactors have been helpful. He rejects those who insist that freedom must be surrendered as the price of material progress. If freedom is the price, then "material benefits would be of dubious value indeed."

"Faith that individual personality can flourish side by side with the machine and with science is vital in this: that men have only to have a faith that is deep enough, a belief sufficiently firm, in their daily work and living, that these things can be done—and then they will be done. For no insoluble physical problems stand in the way. There is no insuperable material barrier. The only serious obstacles are in the minds of men."

## III

He is an administrator with a faith. The faith must become a common faith, eventuate in a common purpose, and manifest itself in a common act.

He has faith in democracy. Did it come from the prophets and Jesus? Did it come from long study of Jefferson and Lincoln? I do not know. But I do know it consumes him. He is democratic in spirit and demeanor. I would use the word "tender" if it were not suggestive to many of weakness—tender in his dealings with people. For him, personality is really sacred. He is characterized by a constant respect for personality, whether it be the secretary in the outer office, the newsboy from whom he buys his paper, or those nearest and dearest to him. But it is a respect that is always related to the source of all life. His writings are God-centered.

In the preface to *TVA: Democracy on the March*, he said, "I believe men may learn to work in harmony with the forces of nature, neither despoiling what God has given nor helpless to put them to use. I believe in the great potentialities for well-being of the machine and technology and science; and though they do hold a real threat of enslavement and frustration for the human spirit, I believe those dangers can be averted. I believe that through the practice of democracy the world of technology holds out the greatest opportunity of all history for the development of the individual, according to his own talents, aspirations, and willingness to carry the responsibilities of a free man. We have a choice: to use science either for evil or for good. I believe men can make themselves free." Note the words "God," "individual," "talents," "free."

No wonder the great tablets put on the TVA dams bear

the simple legend, "Built for the People of the United States." Jefferson and Lincoln would uncover their heads before such memorials. The fruits of science have been dedicated to the good of the people. It was natural that a man with faith in democracy should insist that moral principles should rule in the TVA development. He listed two: "First, that resource development must be governed by the unity of nature herself." After all, God endowed the Valley with those resources and their unity is of the Eternal. "Second, that the people must participate actively in that development." Yes, Carl Sandburg would have an attentive listener in Lilienthal if he would read again, "The People, Yes."

He subtitles his chapter "Democracy at the Grass Roots," in which he outlines his plan of decentralization through which the people make the decisions at the place the work is done, "For the People and By the People." He quotes Walt Whitman:

It is not the earth, it is not America who is so great,  
It is I who am great or to be great, it is You up there, or  
any one,  
It is to walk rapidly through civilizations, governments,  
theories,  
Through poems, pageants, shows, to form individuals.  
Underneath all, individuals, I swear nothing is good to me  
now that ignores individuals.

He fought and won against good men who would establish controls in a faraway office. He insisted upon "an alternative to big government." It is "administration of national policies by states and local units of government. . . ." The problem is "to divorce the two ideas of authority and administration of

authority, . . . to crowd more, not less, responsibility into the community." He sought to "localize" errors, knowing that "centralization always glorifies the importance of paper work." "As men and organizations acquire a preoccupation with papers, they become . . . less perceptive of the reality of those matters with which they should be dealing: actual people and problems in a real America—highways, wheat, drought, floods, back yards, blast furnaces." Thus TVA did not set up a large central staff, nor send federal employees to the farmers. It "entered into a joint program with existing agencies."

An administrator with faith, in God and in the people. In his address before the New York Herald Tribune Forum, October 21st, 1947, he said, "The basic source of the strength of American civilization does not lie in an 'economic system.' The wellsprings of our vitality are not economic. They go deeper still: they are ethical and spiritual. Our society in America is founded not upon the cold and bloodless 'economic man' of the Marxist, but upon a faith in man as an end in himself. We believe in man. We believe in men not only as production units but as children of God. We believe that the purpose of our society is not primarily to assure the 'safety of the state' but to safeguard human dignity and the freedom of the individual."

#### IV

Thus the reform that is flowing from his administration is the extension of democracy to all the activities of men, the building of a society in which every personality shall have opportunity for the fullest self-expression of which he is capable, a social order in which the sacredness of every per-

sonality is recognized and the technology that emerges from research shall be used to bring abundant life to men. He is fearful of the planning that does enslave, but appreciative of the planning that frees, the latter being based on his concept of decentralization and his faith in the people. He told Jonathan Daniels, who recorded the conversation in his *Saturday Review of Literature* article entitled "Breakfast with a Democrat," "There is something about planning that is attractive to that type of person who has a yen to order the lives of other people. It has an attraction for persons of a vague and diffuse kind of mind given to grandiose pictures not of this world. Planning is a subject that attracts those who are in a hurry, but are rather hazy as to where they want to go so rapidly, or whether people want to scurry along with them. But planning and those charged with responsibility for the formulation and execution of plans must, above all, be realistic and pragmatic. Effective planners understand and believe in people, in the average man." Continuing his conversation with Daniels, he said, "I have no confidence in progress that comes from plans concocted by supermen and imposed upon the rest of the community for its own good. I don't have much faith in 'uplift'. I deeply believe in the notion of progress, and I have confidence in the general good sense of the average man and woman. I believe deeply in giving people freedom to make their own choice. It seems to me that the duty of leadership is to see that that choice is available. . . . I try to remember . . . always—that while most of us are dealing with figures, with blueprints, with charts and budgets, with building things, that is not what TVA is all about. TVA is about people and for people. TVA is about men and women and children."



It is one thing to believe in democracy. It is another to carry democracy into administration. The chief impression I carried back from a visit to the Valley was the spirit that characterized the people, on the farms, in the offices, in the great power-houses, in the staff. It was a friendly spirit, full of faith—a sense of teamplay, and of a game great and worth winning. It was for the present and for the future; and everywhere there was tribute to the leader. He was of them and for them. His house was simple, but rich in intrinsic culture. His laughter was unrestrained, his interest in people real, his mastery of the job evident. There was no sense of hurry but a real sense of movement along straight lines because they are the shortest distance between two points. The farmers called him “Mr. Lilienthal” to us. They respected him. They called him “Dave” to his face. They loved him. His staff respected and loved him. Yes, an administrator with the common good in his heart and the genius to serve it in his head; an administrator with faith, faith in democracy and in the Father of the individuals who are of worth and compose the democratic community.

It was when he was suffering the torture of the attempt to deny him the privilege of serving as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission by pinning the label of Communism upon him, questioning his Americanism, and discounting the splendid achievements in the Valley, that he spoke out of the depths of his soul and phrased the democratic faith in an unforgettable answer. He had been asked for certain detailed figures on Muscle Shoals, and he replied, “I want to warn the Senate that they had better not confirm me, if it is their expectation that I carry a great miscellany of figures in my head. I just don’t operate that way. And that may be a major handicap, in

which case you ought to know about it." The prodding continued, and he was asked if he was not a Communist. Up to that point he had undergone the inquisition with outward composure. Now he suddenly turned to face the questioner. As the *Washington Post* reported, "in a voice which was low, but electric with fervor," he replied:

"This I DO carry in my head, Senator.

"I will do my best to make it clear. My convictions are not so much concerned with what I am against as what I am for; and that excludes a lot of things automatically.

"Traditionally, democracy has been an affirmative doctrine rather than merely a negative one.

"I believe—and I conceive the Constitution of the United States to rest upon, as does religion—the fundamental proposition of the integrity of the individual; and that all government and all private institutions must be designed to promote and protect and defend the integrity and the dignity of the individual; that that is the essential meaning of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, as it is essentially the meaning of religion.

"Any form of government, therefore, and any other institutions which make men means rather than ends, which exalt the state or any other institutions above the importance of men, which place arbitrary power over men as a fundamental tenet of government are contrary to that conception, and, therefore, I am deeply opposed to them.

"The communistic philosophy as well as the communistic form of government falls within this category, for their fundamental tenet is quite to the contrary. The fundamental tenet of communism is that the state is an end in itself, and that

therefore the powers which the state exercises over the individual are without any ethical standard to limit them.

"That I deeply disbelieve.

"It is very easy simply to say that one is not a Communist. And, of course, if my record requires me to state that very affirmatively, then it is a great disappointment to me.

"It is very easy to talk about being against communism. It is equally important to believe those things which provide a satisfying and effective alternative. Democracy is that satisfying, affirmative alternative.

"Its hope in the world is that it is an affirmative belief, rather than being simply a belief against something else and nothing more.

"One of the tenets of democracy that grows out of this central core of a belief that the individual comes first, that all men are the children of God and that their personalities are therefore sacred, carries with it a great belief in civil liberties and their protection, and a repugnance to anyone who would steal from a human being that which is most precious to him—his good name—either by imputing things to him by innuendo or by insinuation. And it is especially an unhappy circumstance that occasionally that is done in the name of democracy. This, I think, can tear our country apart and destroy it if we carry it further.

"I deeply believe in the capacity of democracy to surmount any trials that may lie ahead, provided only that we practice it in our daily lives.

"And among the things we must practice is that while we seek fervently to ferret out the subversive and antidemocratic forces in the country, we do not at the same time, by hysteria, by resort to innuendo, and smears, and other un-

fortunate tactics, besmirch the very cause that we believe in, and cause a separation among our people—cause one group and one individual to hate another, based on mere attacks, mere unsubstantiated attacks upon their loyalty.

“I want also to add that part of my conviction is based on my training as an Anglo-American common law lawyer. It is the very basis and the great heritage of the English people to this country, which we have maintained, that we insist on the strictest rules of credibility of witnesses and on the avoidance of hearsay, and that gossip shall be excluded, in the courts of justice. And that, too, is an essential of our democracy.

“Whether by administrative agencies acting arbitrarily against business organizations, or whether by investigating activities of legislative branches, whenever those principles fail, those principles of the protection of an individual and his good name against besmirchment by gossip, hearsay and the statements of witnesses who are not subject to cross-examination—then, too, we have failed in carrying forward our ideals in respect to democracy.

“That I deeply believe.”

What is his faith? He is a Jew by birth, and his faith in God is reverent and honest. He is intellectually incapable of speaking of God and of “our Father” without belief in God as Father. In nearly all of his public addresses, he makes his faith known; and he did so in his book, that has been translated into many languages, and republished in one of the paper-covered volumes for mass circulation. I have never discussed theology with him nor the creeds of Christendom, but I regard him as one of the truest Christians I have ever known. I do not mean that he has subscribed in any formal way to

the doctrinal statements of any Christian church, nor do I mean that he turns to church rather than to synagogue. I do mean that he is a religious man, devout and reverent, with unswerving loyalty to the principles Jesus revealed in his teaching and conduct, the kind of man to whom Jesus would turn if he walked the earth again and were seeking disciples. I stress the fact of faith, because Lilienthal as an administrator makes so much of it. He knows the basic questions lie in that realm, and he strives for spiritual understanding, and deliberately tries to do the will of God.

He invited me to be present in the chambers of Federal Judge Taylor of Knoxville, when he was sworn in as chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission of the United States. I realized as I stood there that upon this brilliant and devoted social servant and his colleagues peace may rest; and that if peace can be maintained, this man might lead us to a richer future in which the benefits of man's mastery over nature might mean undreamed advance in the life of the spirit. I saw upon his face the resolve of the man whose will is set unflinchingly to do right, whose calling he regards as sacred. I knew that he had renounced wealth to serve. His brilliance would have meant a fortune in the law, and big business would have grasped at the chance of his services, no matter what the cost. I was interested in the little Bible that was used in the ceremony. It had been given to Mr. Lilienthal by his mother when he was but seven years of age. The Holy Book was made even more sacred and precious by a mother's love. On the fly-leaf was a penciled reference to the story of David and Goliath—a mother's faith, no doubt. If this David can conquer the destructive powers of this modern Goliath, the power of atomic energy to destroy, he will stand among the

great of men. The occasion was so significant, so sacred, I said very quietly to my friend Lilienthal, "God bless you, David." He was deeply moved. "Thank you, thank you," he replied. "This is a task no man dare undertake alone. I must have the help of the Lord."

## V

He is an administrator with a purpose. Men of lesser breed ask, What is he after? Lilienthal sees humanity as precious. He sees science as a servant. He would bring science to the service of man, and do so under the conditions of freedom. In the Valley, I heard from farmers who proudly co-operated with his program, but who had been slow to give consent. Lilienthal knows that to coerce a man is to shackle his spirit. A man must choose, and he must be free in that choice. He can be persuaded by facts, by example, by friendship, but he must not be compelled. Patience is part of progress. A coerced man is a rebellious man. A convinced man is a fellow worker. Lilienthal knew this because he loved people. The uplifter doesn't know this, because too often he despises the very folk he would help. He looks down upon them; but not Lilienthal. He sat down beside them.

His purpose is to turn the results of research into channels of blessing. In his address at Lehigh University at the commencement in 1949 he said, "Whether millions of human beings shall go hungry or be fed, shall suffer disease or enjoy good health, be condemned to drudgery or use machines to relieve their toil—more and more, such human questions are determined by modern technology. Even more than this: technology and the machine have become central figures in the perilous struggle to safeguard the free spirit of man and

to establish a peace that is a true peace. Technology applied for human welfare can bring not only material well being but can also nourish the free spirit of man." He speaks of men skeptical of God who would redesign man to fit the assembly line, who would "recreate man in the image of the machine." "The machine and technology," he argues, "are neither good nor evil in themselves. They are good only when man uses them for good." "We cannot master the machine in the interest of the human spirit, unless we have faith in people. This is the foundation of everything. The rock upon which all these efforts rests must be a deep and abiding faith in human beings which is a faith in the supreme worth of life. . . . This democracy of ours is founded upon a faith in the judgment of the people as a whole." He insists that facts must be in the hands of the people. He knows, as he told Archibald Macleish, "Public accountability tends to vitiate itself, if the people don't have enough facts to go on, because they believe the facts are secret." In his present administrative job, he faces the dilemma of the issue of security and secrecy. He knows this vast new power must be kept in the hands of the people, and the people must be kept advised of all the truth possible, without endangering national security. When he thinks of people, he thinks of all the people of the world. Thus he favored an international control of atomic energy that would eliminate the problems of security and release the discovery for service. He knew that the Russian counter-proposals lacked reality, and he was for reality. The Acheson-Lilienthal Report was realistic, but the Russians would have none of it.

The method used by Lilienthal in chairing the committee that prepared this Report is another evidence of both his administrative skill and democratic spirit. One of the mem-

bers of the committee said, "Lilienthal began by saying, 'We face a problem to be solved, not a debate to be won. If there is a solution, we can find it together. If there isn't an answer, we will find that out and say so. It is not a matter of the majority of us coercing the minority, but of all of us reaching unanimity.'" And they did. It is the method he uses to realize his purpose. Some grow restive, but he remains patient. Unable to secure international control, he drives ahead to keep pre-eminence in this field, believing that pre-eminence itself will contribute to the solution that he regards as inevitable. Even though Russia will not now co-operate, the pressure of demand by her own people when they learn what can be done for humanity by atomic energy will force the acceptance of a realistic plan that will eliminate the danger of the weapon and release the benefits of the gift.

Lilienthal's training as a boxer is seen occasionally when an opponent who strikes below the belt is jolted by a hard uppercut. He slashes with facts, and drives home the telling body blows of faith. He concluded his *Atlantic Monthly* debate with Mr. Charles W. Kellogg, representing the power interests, with this challenge: "Once more the conflict is on—the contest between the vigorous, the imaginative, the confident, on the one hand, and the tired, the complacent, the fearful on the other. Will it be necessary within our time for another crisis president to rise before a prostrate country to assure us that 'the only thing we have to fear is fear itself?'"

He told the graduating class at Gettysburg High School, "Change: That is what is occurring today, all over the world, even in the most remote mountain valleys of the islands of the sea. . . . Sometimes we forget what is behind the machines and the discoveries. We say: 'This is the atomic age,' and



thereby obscure the truth, that like other times of man this is the human age; that behind new knowledge are individuals, human beings, men and women driven by a ceaseless urge, the desire to know, the desire to understand the world." He pled for social inventiveness, and the experimentation essential to discover world law and order and to establish justice. "Knowledge always has a two-sided aspect. It can be used for good, for human betterment, for making of a world in which there is less suffering, less poverty, less misery. Or it can be used to increase jealousy and bitterness and hatred among men, used for destruction and wars." I wish I might have heard him in that tense but unrestrained style of speech as he said to these young people, "Which it shall be depends upon human beings, upon the human heart, the human spirit; upon how well we, as human beings, are able to work out our relations one to another. Whether the future is black or is bright depends not upon how much we know but upon how we use what we know. And I firmly believe that, as the children of a loving Father, it shall be our destiny to find the way to use our knowledge for the flowering of the human spirit and the glory of God. . . . There must . . . be greater love and understanding among men. And there must be greater faith, faith in mankind, and faith in the purposes of the Creator of the universe."

He is indeed an administrator with faith and with purpose. The faith is in the purpose of God. Thus, the administrator becomes a co-worker with God, and reform becomes regeneration.

## VI

Why is he at this task? He cannot help it. He was called.

But in his address to the University of Virginia, he proposed that a man who possesses the qualifications "should actually spend a part of his life in some form of public service. . . . In the next three decades, I urge that every educated person who is qualified to do so plan definitely to set aside a number of years for the rendering of service in the legislative or executive branches of his local, state, or federal government, and that, as nearly as possible, this be full-time service. . . . I propose that, out of the best and most productive years of your life, you should carve out a segment in which you put your private career aside and serve your community and your country, and thereby serve your children, your neighbors, your fellow men, and the cause of freedom. . . ." This was his answer to the fatuous slogan of an earlier decade, "Take care of Number One."

Always, faith, purpose, and action. Administration is a means to enthrone the faith, to realize the purpose. Even in his Crawfordsville, Indiana, speech, in which he called upon the people to watch their public servants, whether in the executive branch, the military, or in Congress, to be aware of the danger that lies in slowing up research in the name of security or under the pressure of ignorance, demagoguery, or petty politics, to keep informed and to remember that atomic energy is the people's business and that the real decisions are not scientific but social, he came back in his closing plea that all this must be done for our children, and said, "Anyway, that idea helps me on my own job; that idea and the feeling I have deep in me that God, the Father of us all, did not make man in His image and endow him with capacity to learn Nature's secrets in order that man use that knowledge to destroy the human race." The concluding sentence is the other

side of his faith, "In the conscience and the judgment of the people lies the strength of democracy."

It was in similar strain that he addressed the bishops and district superintendents of The Methodist Church in 1946 at Grand Rapids. He asked, "What is the relation of scientific advance to the inner life of man? How does it affect that mighty and precious intangible, man's stewardship to God and to his fellow man? Can science and technical skills be used to further that inner life, to enrich and dignify human personality, to fortify the things of the spirit. . . . That there is a relation between man's new vast power to improve his environment and his inner life seems to me clear. . . . But what that change means, as it relates to man's accountability to God, as it relates to the soul of man, that is not something an administrator like myself is qualified to interpret. This is a responsibility of philosophers, of the churches, and of churchmen, a responsibility which calls for their special training and their special insight. . . . But man's new knowledge and skill makes his need for the guidance of religion more, rather than less, urgent." His humility keeps him from recognizing the fact that the faith alive in the administrative process is the most effective interpretation of stewardship possible.

His purpose as an administrator was thrown upon the screen of the bishops' thought in sharp relief, as he described again the TVA. Said he, "What the Tennessee Valley has seen and what the whole world has sent some of its best minds to observe, is a systematic attempt to utilize the resources of nature and of science, not of science for its own sake, as a modern graven image, not of the state or of some new political or bureaucratic elite, but in the service of individual human beings, *their* well being, *their* hopes, *their* purposes. . . ."

Referring again to the whole issue of moral ends achieved by scientific means, he said, "This problem is at its base a moral issue and one that is the very stuff of our daily lives. Each day we must meet the test this issue presents—in business dealings, in legislative halls, in union meetings. For in the application of science to men's lives, there is a perennial and unremitting conflict between two opposing precepts, that thread their way through every phase of American life; on the one hand, the faith in man's stewardship to God as the common Father of us all, and, on the other, the conflicting concept of power, of the power of men over other human beings. Between these two opposing beliefs, we see re-enacted under the fierce and terrible light of modern science and concentrated political power, the age-old struggle, the struggle between those who would use men as a means of power and those to whom men are the children of God, and therefore not means but ends in themselves."

Lilienthal's utterances are full of the declarations, "I deeply believe, I firmly believe." It is administration based on conviction, carried out with conviction, by a man who incarnates conviction.

Lilienthal once described the five atomic commissioners as "quintuplets in a quandary." That may be apt when related to administrative policy. It is not true when related to this man's administrative principles. There is no quandary there. His feet are on the rock, and he seeks to build a social structure on the rock. Some who would build on sand may well remember that when storms come and winds beat upon such houses, they fall.

## VII

David Lilienthal has, by demonstration, reformed the administrative procedures of governmental enterprise. The TVA under his leadership proved that the people can conduct vast enterprise honestly, efficiently, democratically, without bureaucracy. It demonstrated the principle of decentralized control under federally determined policy. The charter of the public corporation known as the Tennessee Valley Authority was the law under which he labored. This law revealed the wisdom, the social vision, and the sagacity of Senator Norris and President Roosevelt. The democratic administration in the Valley itself, the participation of the people in decision and service, the development of a common purpose, has pointed the way to salvation in other valleys. No future flood will fail to raise the question, If the Tennessee can be controlled, why not the Missouri, the Mississippi? And if we build dams to control floods, why should they not be multi-purpose dams and produce power and provide navigation? Why not develop the resources of the region in the unity with which the Creator endowed the region? The successful answers to these questions in the Tennessee Valley constitute reforming power. David Lilienthal is chiefly responsible for this new knowledge, new faith, and new resolve let loose upon the people. His has been a contribution of first significance in keeping great treasure in the hands of the people. Atomic energy is their business, and the people know it, thanks to David Lilienthal. Let the Army take over, and atomic energy is primarily a military weapon; let private business take over, and the development of atomic energy becomes a matter of profit; let the people control, and

the basic decisions are made for the welfare of all—there will be weapons until man learns to live together under law or until effective international control is set up; there will be profits for score upon score of private enterprises to whom privileges will be leased; but there will be kept for the people the means to wage war on disease and poverty, to lift burdens from the backs of those who toil, to summon the finest minds of science for continuing research and the further mastery of nature's secrets. This power, God-given, can be used for God-serving ends.

David Lilienthal has reformed by personal example. He has introduced the co-operative approach to problems but has insisted upon the unbiased approach to any problem and the undaunted pursuit of its solution in a true scientific spirit. Solutions are reached in the interest of the common good. He has reformed by revealing to the realist that the truest realist is the one who learns of the reality upon which all life depends, and then realistically seeks the means to express the principles written into the nature of things. The philosopher-administrator is a better bet than the philosopher-king, because the administrator can be and is an exponent of democracy, dependent upon the consent of those to whom he explains both his philosophy and his program.

In David Lilienthal I have found the passion of the prophet coupled with the logic of the lawyer, both dedicated to the service of society in the name of our common Father. He moves with certainty because he is sure his convictions are in accord with the will of God. Under the heaviest of pressure and subject to the severest of strain, he draws upon the spiritual reserves of the righteous man. His mind is clear, because unimpeded by the reservations of self-interest and

vulgar ambition. When facing heavy attack by unprincipled enemies, who masquerade under beloved banners and in patriotic raiment, he stands firm in the knowledge of invulnerability because of an inner integrity that no falsehood can reach. His record is clean, and his mind is clean. His character is built upon religious faith, intellectual honesty, moral principle, and a resolve to serve that is matched only by his good will toward all men. His humility is related to the size of his task, and perhaps unconsciously to the fact that he is an instrument being used by the Eternal. But his humility that is honest and his modesty that is pleasing must never disarm the opponents who would attack the principles he espouses and the people he serves. He fights with every available power mobilized, with mind always master of passion, and with a coolness that deceives and defeats. He knows how to build supporting public opinion, because he asks nothing for himself, and therefore taps reserves of support not available to the self-seeker too often seen in administration. He has compassion on the multitude, that is, he thinks of the masses as composed of persons. Natural, intensely human, full of laughter, a tender and devoted husband, a father who is a comrade, such is this administrator. One day, when in discussion with his very brilliant children, he was led to say to his daughter, who seemed to be besting him in an argument, "Nancy, remember I am old enough to be your father."

David Lilienthal is known throughout the world. His works have gone before him. In moments of religious devotion, he must have heard the Father's "Well done"—not, of course, as a suggestion that the hour had come for him to enter into the joys of life everlasting, but as a summons to further labor as a co-worker. Long ago, another young Jew declared,

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"My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." David Lilienthal would be the first to say, "the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose," but, nevertheless, he is at his Father's work, and, as an administrator, has brought the regenerating power of faith and of purpose to play upon the task of serving the people, and is thus reforming the practices of men. It may be that the Father has even greater work for this man of many talents. David Lilienthal concluded his now famous book with these words, "Here in the valley where I have been writing this statement of faith, the people know the job of our time can be done, for they have read the signs and reaped the first token harvest. They know it can be done, not only *for* the people, but *by* the people." The book was "Dedicated to the People who live in the Tennessee Valley Region." If it be he writes another book someday and gives it the title, "Atomic Energy: Democracy Marches On," it may be dedicated to "The People Who Live in Peace Throughout the World." If such a book is someday written, a grateful world will remember an administrator through whom a common faith became a common purpose, and the common man became free.

Chapter IV . . . . . The Saint as  
Social Reformer

## *Mohandas K. Gandhi*

GANDHI WAS ASSASSINATED JANUARY 30TH, 1948. THAT EVENING Nehru broadcasted to a brokenhearted nation, beginning with these word: "Friends and Comrades, the light has gone out of our lives, and there is darkness everywhere." Speaking extemporaneously, without script or preparation, Nehru continued, "The light has gone out, I said, and yet I was wrong. . . . A thousand years later that light will still be seen in this country and the world, . . . for that light represented something more than the immediate present; it represented the living truth, . . . the eternal truths."

On February 2nd, he addressed the Indian Parliament and said, "In the ages to come, centuries and maybe millenniums after us, people will think of this generation when this man of God trod the earth and will think of us who, however small, could also follow his path and probably tread on that holy ground where his feet had been. Let us be worthy of him. Let us always be so."

February 12th, in the morning, Gandhi's ashes were carried in a sorrowing procession to the bank of the sacred river and thence by boat to the confluence of the Ganges and the Jumna, and there immersed. More than a million people had

assembled on the river bank, and Nehru, in the Hindustani tongue, said, "The last journey has ended. The final pilgrimage has been made. . . . let us, standing here on the banks of the Ganges, search our own hearts and ask ourselves the question: How far have we followed the path shown to us by Gandhiji and how far have we tried to live in peace and co-operation with others. . . . If we have learned anything from Gandhiji, we must bear no ill-will or enmity towards any person." He spoke of the day of silence Gandhi observed once each week. "Now that voice is silenced," but, "it will resound in the minds and hearts of our people . . . in the long ages to come. For that voice is the voice of truth, and though truth may occasionally be suppressed, it can never be put down. Violence for him was the opposite of truth and therefore he preached to us against violence not only of the hand but of the mind and heart. . . . The foundations of a lasting victory can only be laid on the rock of truth. Gandhiji gave us a new method of struggle and political warfare, a new kind of diplomacy. He demonstrated the efficacy of truth and goodwill and non-violence in politics. He taught us to respect and co-operate with every Indian as a man and as a fellow-citizen, irrespective of his political belief or religious creed. We all belong to Mother India and have to live and die here. We all are equal partners in the freedom we have won. Every one of our three or four hundred million people must have an equal right to the opportunities and blessings that free India has to offer. It was not a few privileged persons that Gandhiji strove for and died for. We have only to strive for the same ideal and in the same way. Then only shall we be worthy to say, 'Mahatma Gandhi Ki Jai.'" Victory to Mahatma Gandhi.

Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, in a nation-wide broadcast, voiced the

heart of India. She quoted Jesus: "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends," and then continued, "but there is one thing greater, and that is that he should rise again after laying down his life. This is the third day. He must rise again. O Bapuji, come back from the dead and lead us. We do not want you to rest. We need you too much."

A saint had become a martyr. The apostle of non-violence had fallen at the hand of violence. But the weaponless leader of millions had conquered. His beloved India was free and reform had been wrought by regeneration.

## I

Gandhi was a saint who applied the scientific method in his search for the laws that govern in the realm of the spirit. *My Experiments with Truth* is the title of his autobiography. With the persistence of a scientist and the devotion of a disciple, Gandhi studied the spiritual life and sought to discover the will of God. A fact was a fact and hypotheses that failed to include all the facts were rejected. "Facts mean truth," he said. The hypothesis itself was not proclaimed until tested out in his own life and proved to be workable. "It has been the rule of my life never to ask anyone to do anything which I had not tried out in practice myself," he wrote.

"My life is based on disciplinary resolutions," he declared, and that is true, but the resolutions resulted from experimentation. He was a reformer of the reformers, but the reform began in his heart and moved out by way of individuals to the millions. Self-purification preceded social purification. "The path of self-purification," he said, "is hard and steep."

To attain to perfect purity one has to become absolutely passion-free in thought, speech and action; to rise above the opposing currents of love and hatred, attachment and repulsion." He continued, "I know that I have not in me as yet that triple purity, in spite of constant ceaseless striving for it. That is why the world's praise fails to move me, indeed it very often stings me. To conquer the subtle passions seems to me to be harder far than the physical conquest of the world by force of arms. . . . So long as a man does not of his own free will put himself last among his fellow creatures, there is no salvation for him."

The reforms won by Gandhi cannot be understood save in the light of Gandhi's fundamental purpose: "What I want to achieve . . . is self-realization, to see God face to face, to attain salvation." His autobiography is the story of that search, but it is more. "It is not my purpose to attempt a real autobiography. I simply want to tell the story of my numerous experiments with truth. . . . My life consists of nothing but those experiments." He consented to write after being importuned by his followers. He told them the title Mahatma pained him, "but," he continued, "I should certainly like to narrate my experiments in the spiritual field which are known only to myself, and from which I have derived such power as I possess for working in the political field." Note the words: experiments, spiritual, power, political! Romain Rolland, writing before Indian freedom was won, says: "This is the man who has stirred three hundred million people to revolt, who has shaken the foundations of the British Empire, and who has introduced into human politics the strongest religious impetus of the last two thousand years."

Truth for him was the sovereign principle and non-violence

the only means for its realization. "To see the universal and all-pervading spirit of truth face to face, one must be able to love the meanest of creation as oneself," he said. "That is why my devotion to truth has drawn me into the field of politics; and I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humility, that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means. . . . God can never be realized by one who is not pure of heart. . . . Purification of one's self necessarily leads to the purification of one's surroundings." He knew that only the pure in heart see God, but he also knew that such vision opened the eyes to the suffering of God's children and commanded such service to "the least of these" that society itself might be cleansed.

C. F. Andrews in the notable volume *Mahatma Gandhi, His Own Story* tells of Gandhi's great campaign in South Africa and concludes that it must stand "not only as the first but also as the classic example of the use of non-resistance by organised masses of men for the redress of grievances."

Andrews' description is vivid and records the essential principles that underlay the victory. "With a skill, patience, and heroism well-nigh unexampled, he took these thousands of ignorant, untrained indentured laborers, sore oppressed in an alien land, and, by sheer power of personal example, welded them into a single body, and instigated a non-resistant revolt which brought them, after years of struggle, the freedom they sought. Gandhi's first step was to teach his followers to have no part in the life of a society which denied them the elementary rights of men (Non-co-operation). His next step was to discipline his followers to do no violence upon their oppressors—to suffer injury themselves but to return no injury to others (Non-violence). And his last step was to lead his fol-

lowers to the heroic achievement of serving their oppressors—helping them, coming to their relief and rescue, whenever they fell into need (Soul-force)."

The principles he applied in social struggle had been discovered in the struggle of a soul for truth. They were tested out in vast social movements, checked and rechecked, and as experience proved their validity they became for him the absolute rule of conduct. "For me," he said, "they appear to be absolutely correct, and seem for the time being to be final. For if they were not, I should base no action on them." He was ready as is the scientist to admit error. He used the striking term, "Himalayan miscalculation," to describe one terrible mistake, but instead of condemning the poor and the ignorant whose purification was insufficient for the practice of good will toward the enemy, and was inadequate to the task of loving those who spitefully used them, he condemns himself and fasts well nigh unto death as penance.

Gandhi's story need not be retold, but his discoveries must be examined. He appears to have been endowed with an experimental type of mind. During his stay in England, the record is one of the trial-and-error method as he tries out British ways and dietetic theories. His determined will is early seen in the "disciplinary resolutions" that rule his study life and his practice of simplicity. "I framed my own timetable to the minute. . . . I was ploughed in Latin. . . . I gave up the suite of rooms and rented one instead, invested in a stove, and began cooking my breakfast at home. . . . Plain living saved me plenty of time and I passed my examination. Let not the reader think that this living made my life by any means a dreary affair. On the contrary the change harmonized my inward and outward life. It was more in keeping with the



means of my family. My life was certainly more truthful and my soul knew no bounds of joy."

Towards the end of his second year in London he began the serious study of religion. He read the Gita. "The book struck me as one of priceless worth. . . . I regard it today as the book par excellence for the knowledge of Truth." He read it first in Sir Edwin Arnold's translation. He met Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. Besant and read the writings of the Theosophists, and then, at the suggestion of Christian friends, turned to the Bible. The Old Testament "invariably sent me to sleep . . . but just for the sake of being able to say that I had read it, I plodded through the other books." "But the New Testament produced a different impression, especially the Sermon on the Mount which went straight to my heart. I compared it with the Gita. The verses, 'But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man take away thy coat let him have thy cloak too,' delighted me beyond measure. . . . That renunciation was the highest form of religion appealed to me greatly."

He read a book on atheism and notes, "It had no effect on me, for I had already crossed the Sahara of atheism." But he records, "It was in England that I first discovered the futility of mere religious knowledge. . . . A knowledge of religion, as distinguished from experience, seems but chaff in . . . moments of trial." He had attended a Conference at Portsmouth and found that the recreation of the evening was about to lead to immorality. He writes, "I recall this as the first occasion on which a woman, other than my wife, moved me to lust." He seemed to hear God speak, "Whence this devil in you? Be off, quick!" He rushed from the scene of

temptation and in subsequent contemplation realized that knowledge of religion was not enough; he must possess the power of religion. "I did not then know the essence of religion or of God, and how He works in us. Only vaguely I understood that God had saved me on that occasion. On all occasions of trial He has saved me. I know that the phrase 'God saved me' has a deeper meaning for me today, and still feel that I have not yet grasped its entire meaning. Only richer experience can help me to a fuller understanding. But in all my trials—of a spiritual nature, as a lawyer, in conducting institutions, and in politics—I can say that God saved me. When every hope is gone, 'when helpers fail and comforts flee,' I find that help arrives somehow, from I know not where. Supplication, worship, prayer are no superstition; they are acts more real than the acts of eating, drinking, sitting or walking. It is no exaggeration to say that they alone are real, all else is unreal. . . . I have not the slightest doubt that prayer is an unfailing means of cleansing the heart of passions. But it must be combined with the utmost humility."

He passed his examinations and was called to the bar June 10, 1891. He was enrolled in the High Court June 11, and on June 12 sailed for India.

Gandhi himself quotes, "Man proposes but God disposes," and relates the forces that played upon him and changed the course of his life. He was shy, unable to speak in public. He searched for the opportunity to serve in the law. He experienced a bitter rebuff from a British Political Agent with whom he was acquainted. He was sore at heart because he had sought, at the instance of his brother, to gain certain privileges for the brother. Gandhi was ordered out of office. "This shock changed the course of my life," he wrote.

## II

An offer to work in South Africa was accepted. It is in Africa that he experienced his first bitter discrimination based on race. He had a first-class ticket for the train, but was told he must go to a third-class compartment. He refused and insisted that he be allowed to enter the first-class space. " 'No, you won't,' said the official, 'you must leave this compartment, or else I shall have to call a police constable to push you out.' Gandhi answered, 'Yes, you may, I refuse to get out voluntarily.' " He was taken from the train.

"I began to think of my duty. Should I fight for my rights or go back to India, or should I go on to Pretoria without minding the insults, and return to India after finishing the case? It would be cowardice to run back to India without fulfilling my obligation. The hardship to which I was subjected was superficial—only a symptom of the deep disease of colour prejudice. I should try, if possible, to root out the disease and suffer hardships in the process." He was right, hardships were a part of the process. Another experience on a bus results in severe beating. He is ready to meet his duties as a lawyer, but is resolved to measure up to his obligations as a man. "My first step was to call a meeting of all the Indians in Pretoria and to present to them a picture of their condition in the Transvaal. . . . My speech at this meeting may be said to have been the first public speech in my life."

The story of South Africa with its discovery of new resources and new methods of social reform, of Gandhi's services in war and of his sufferings in peace, of the eventual victory and of his return to India, is of great historic significance in itself, but is of interest here primarily because, during

this period, his experiments with truth led to discoveries of spiritual principles and of their application that were to shake not only the foundations of the British Empire, but to open doors to the common man round the world. He writes, "Thus God laid the foundations for my life in South Africa and sowed the seed for the fight for national self-respect." A later comment is illuminating: "It has always been a mystery to me how men can feel themselves honoured by the humiliation of their fellow-beings." This was uttered following the humiliating act of an indentured laborer who removed his head-dress in Gandhi's presence, thinking that Gandhi too would demand this obeisance as did the whites.

Gandhi built up a successful law practice. He returns at last to India. The injustices suffered by Indians in South Africa are presented to India. Contrary to his plans, it becomes necessary for him to return to South Africa. Upon arrival, he is badly beaten. "They pelted me with stones, brickbats and rotten eggs. Someone snatched away my turban, whilst others began to batter and kick me. I fainted and caught hold of the front railings of a house and stood there to get my breath. But it was impossible." He calmly considered the matter and later writes: "It is idle to adjudicate upon the right and wrong of incidents that have already happened. It is useful to understand them and, if possible, to learn a lesson from them for the future." The mob had sung,

Hang old Gandhi  
On the sour apple tree.

Gandhi refused to prosecute anyone.

Reform continues. Leadership consumes time. But what

manner of man is this? He writes, "So I found time to serve in the small hospital. This meant two hours every morning, including the time taken in going to and from the hospital. The work brought me some peace." In the midst of pressure, he takes two hours each day to nurse the sick. Later, when pneumonic plague seized the community ("more terrible and fatal than the bubonic," he says,) Gandhi was summoned and he summoned others and they nursed the victims. "It is my faith, based on experience, that if one's heart is pure, calamity brings in its train men and measures to fight it."

What were the ideas maturing in the mind of this man who was experimenting with truth? What power could be brought to bear upon the community and the government by which discrimination might be removed? When he had opposed the Franchise Bill in Natal, in 1893, he records, "I took considerable pains over drawing this petition. I read all the literature available on the subject. . . . I argued that we had a right to the Franchise in Natal, as we had a kind of franchise in India." He secured 10,000 signatures, and mentions the necessity of competent canvassers because "it had been decided not to take a single signature without the signatory fully understanding the petition." "Sustained agitation was essential," he declares.

At this time he notes, "I had made the religion of service my own, as I felt that God could be realized only through service. . . . I found myself in search of God and striving for self-realization. . . . Christian friends had whetted my appetite for knowledge, which had become almost insatiable." After reading Tolstoi, he wrote, "I began to realize more and more the infinite possibilities of universal love." He experimented with a co-operative farm, in educational enterprise, in political

method. Testing, constantly testing. It was the individual heart that must be prepared for social endeavor.

He was called upon to suffer. Imprisonment for him was not "house arrest." "My hands were covered with blisters, and water was oozing from them. I could hardly work with a spade, and felt the weight of it as if it were made of lead. I prayed God to preserve my honor and maintain my limbs intact and restore me sufficient strength to perform my allotted task to the end. I trusted in Him, and went on with my work." He was able to communicate this spirit to others. He knew it had to live in them, if the movement were to live. "Saiyad Ibrahim, a Pathan, showed his back to me, and said, 'Look here, how severely they have thrashed me, I have let the rascals go for your sake, since such are your orders. I am a Pathan, and Pathans never take but always give a beating.' 'Well done, Brother,' I replied, 'I look upon such conduct alone as pure bravery. We will win if we have people of your type.'"

### III

Andrews says, "Mahatma Gandhi's estimate of human conduct . . . will be found to centre in three cardinal virtues, recurrent in all his writings. These are Truth, Loving-kindness, and Inner Purity." His insatiable desire for knowledge led him to read John Ruskin's *Unto This Last*. He could not lay the book aside. "It gripped me. Johannesburg to Durban was a twenty-four hours' journey. The train reached there in the evening. I could not get any sleep that night. I determined to change my life in accordance with the ideals of the book." There it is, truth to be acted upon. The book brought about "an instantaneous and practical transformation in my life. . . .

It . . . captured me." "The teachings of *Unto This Last* I understood to be:

"1. That the good of the individual is contained in the good of all.

"2. That a lawyer's work has the same value as the barber's, inasmuch as all have the same right of earning their livelihood from their work.

"3. That a life of labour, *i.e.*, the life of the tiller of the soil and the handicraftsman, is the life worth living. . . .

"I arose with the dawn, ready to reduce these principles to practice."

His mind is constantly considering all aspects of the problems of the spiritual life. He had noted the waning of enthusiasm when the crisis of conflict passed and the failure of men who pledged money to support a cause to pay the subscription when due. He had been hurt by the readiness of the selfish to let others carry the burdens. He wrote, "It has always been impossible for me to reconcile myself to any one member of the body politic remaining out of use." Experience had taught him "that without infinite patience it was impossible to get the people to do any work. It is the reformer," he saw, "who is anxious for the reform, and not society, from which he should expect nothing better than opposition, abhorrence, and even mortal persecution. Why may not society regard as retrogression what the reformer holds dear as life itself?" He himself became fearful of his own success in the law. "I was afraid that my main business might become merely money-making." The idea of renunciation that had gripped him when in England clung to him.

The problem of applying absolute moral principles to concrete situations concerned him. "The applicability of the

principle of looking at a thing from a different standpoint in different circumstances" he accepted and tried to make clear to his followers, but not too successfully. "But all my life through, the very insistence on truth has taught me to appreciate the beauty of compromise. I saw in later life that this spirit was an essential part of Satyagraha. It has often meant endangering my life and incurring the displeasure of friends. But truth is hard as adamant, and tender as a blossom."

Nehru writes, "Always there has been the inner conflict within him, and in our national politics, between Gandhi as a national leader and Gandhi as a man with a prophetic message which was not confined to India but was for humanity and the world. It is never easy to reconcile strict adherence to truth as one sees it with the exigencies and expediencies of life, especially of political life."

The Gita, the Sermon on the Mount, Tolstoi, Ruskin, Raychandbhai, and others, his own meditations and the careful checking of experience were leading him to renunciation. He speaks of possessions as "tying a white elephant at my door." He asks, "What barrier is there that love cannot break?" He declares, "My experience has shown me that we win justice quickest by rendering justice to the other party."

These are not the fugitive considerations of a dreamer. He was engaged in the practice of law, of political reform, of managing important institutions, of organizing masses of ignorant men and women, and of financing such movements. He dealt with all sorts and conditions of men and women. He was not a teacher speaking out of the quiet of a secluded study, nor a religious leader protected by the customs of a formal service of worship. He was surrounded by his followers who were dependent upon him, caught up in the fury of a



mob bent upon his destruction, at war with all practices that limited God in using him as an instrument, at times a prisoner, an administrator, a teacher, a father, a husband. "Most of my reading since 1893 has been done in jail," he remarks somewhat slyly. Upon a return trip to Bombay, it appeared the ship would founder. When the terrible storm had subsided, he noted, "With the disappearance of danger disappeared also the name of God from their lips."

In the midst of such pressure, he thinks of the question of fasting. Does it contribute to the spiritual life? He is realistic and honest with himself. He writes, "Fasting is useful, when mind co-operates with starving body, or, that is to say, when it cultivates a distaste for the objects that are denied to the body. Mind is at the root of all sensuality. Fasting, therefore, has a limited use, for the fasting man may be continued to be swayed by passion. But it may be said that extinction of the sexual passion is, as a rule, impossible without fasting, which may be said to be indispensable for the observance of *brama-charya* [celibacy]."

He learned lessons from actual experience. He had served in the Boer War, having organized an Ambulance Corps. "During these days, we had to march from twenty to twenty-five miles a day, bearing the wounded on stretchers." He tells of the mortal wound received by Lieutenant Roberts, the son of Lord Roberts. "Our corps had the honor of carrying the body from the field. It was a sultry day. . . . Everyone was thirsting for water. There was a tiny brook on the way where we could slake our thirst. But who was to drink first? We had proposed to come in after the tommies had finished, but they would not begin first, and urged us to do so, and for a while a pleasant competition went on for giving precedence

to one another." The white Tommy, the black Indian, in honor preferring one another. Gandhi pondered that.

His mind moves to the acceptance of three cardinal virtues: (1) non-violence, (2) celibacy, (3) non-possession. He searches for Truth. Experimentation meant strain in his relations within his family, and may raise the question: Is not experimentation pursued rigorously and involving others in itself a form of compulsion? He had to ask serious questions as he considered renunciation. "How was one to treat alike insulting, insolent and corrupt officials, co-workers of yesterday raising meaningless opposition, and men who had always been good to one? How was one to divest oneself of all possessions? Was not a body itself possession enough? Were not wife and children possessions? Was I to destroy all the cupboards of books I had? Was I to give up all I had and follow Him? Straight came the answer: I could not follow Him unless I gave up all I had. . . . I understood more clearly in the light of the Gita teaching the implication of the word 'trustee' . . . I discovered it in religion. I understood the Gita teaching of non-possession to mean that those who desired salvation should act like the trustee who, having control over great possessions, regards not an iota of them as his own. . . . My brother gave me up and practically stopped all communication."

And then he writes, "I realized that even a man's reforming zeal ought not to make him exceed his limits."

The road to sainthood for Gandhi was also *Via Dolorosa*!

It was not by chance that the violent became non-violent. Their leader had won the struggle for inner peace after long battle. No wonder E. Stanley Jones can say that Gandhi "has taught me more of the spirit of Christ than perhaps any man

in East or West," and conclude, "one of the most Christ-like men in history, who fought Christian civilization, so-called, furthered the real thing. God uses many instruments, and He has used Mahatma Gandhi to help Christianize unchristian Christianity."

It was Mrs. Naidu, a woman of wealth, who said, "He taught us to be just, when it was so much easier to be generous."

No wonder this sainted reformer's favorite hymns were "Lead, Kindly Light" and "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross."

Vincent Sheean has chosen *Lead, Kindly Light* as the title of his study of Gandhi. It carries the sub-title, "Gandhi, and the Way to Peace." In a long conference with Gandhi shortly before the assassination, Sheean reports the conversation in these words: "The principal thing he communicated to me was the necessity of the renunciation of the world. He was at great pains to show that the fruits of action are not forbidden, and that the world could be enjoyed, providing it is first renounced. This means, of course, that a man must at all times be ready to give his life for his truth. It involves a great decision which, once made, can never be retraced. Gandhi had himself decided long ago, and since then had never been afraid. Centrally, over-riding everything else, the truth was for him sovereign and identified with the idea of God. The fruits of action might be anything; the world received as a gift of God might be anything; but if the renunciation had first taken place, thoroughly, fully, in the heart, then the consequences, good or ill, could not affect the steadfastness of the soul." Gandhi read from the Isha Upanishad, and translated for Sheean, "The whole world is the garment of the

Lord. Renounce it, then, and receive it back as the gift of God."

#### IV

The saint, by a scientific study of the spirit, reached at last a fundamental conclusion. It lies in the principle called Satyagraha. Gandhi found it hard to express its meaning in English. "Passive resistance" is near, but construed too narrowly by English-speaking people. The word was coined by Maganlal Gandhi, in response to an offer of a prize by *Indian Opinion*, Gandhi's paper. The word first proposed was "Sadgraha," "Sat" meaning truth, and "Agraha" meaning firmness. "But in order to make it clearer, I changed the word to 'Satyagraha,'" writes Gandhi. Gandhi had thought deeply upon what may be called the moral use of physical force. He himself had said, "I would rather see India freed by violence than enchained like a slave by her foreign oppressors." There is no comfort for the coward in the use of soul-force, truth-force, love-force, call it what one may. Gandhi said, "Where there is only a choice between cowardice and violence, I advise violence. . . ." But he had found another and, he believed, both better and more powerful way. "I cultivate the quiet courage of dying without killing. But to him who has not this courage I advise that of killing and of being killed, rather than that of shamefully fleeing from danger. For he who runs away commits mental violence; he runs away because he has not the courage to be killed while he kills." "I would risk violence a thousand times rather than emasculation of the race. I would rather have India resort to arms to defend her honor than that she should in a cowardly

manner become or remain a helpless victim to her own dishonor.

"But I believe that non-violence is infinitely superior to violence, forgiveness more manly than punishment. Forgiveness adorns a soldier. Abstinence is forgiveness only when there is power to punish; it is meaningless when it pretends to proceed from a helpless creature. . . . I do not believe India to be helpless.

"Strength does not come from physical capacity. It comes from indomitable will. Non-violence does not mean meek submission to the will of the evil-doer but the putting of one's whole soul against the will of the tyrant. Working under this law of our being, it is possible for a single individual to defy the whole might of an unjust empire and lay the foundation for that empire's fall or its regeneration."

He knew that the price of practicing non-violence is suffering. He called upon India to face the might of the British Empire with the power of truth, a force he believed irresistible when incarnate in men and women of pure heart pledged to non-violence. "I want India to recognize that she has a soul that cannot perish and that can rise triumphant above every physical weakness and defy the physical combination of the whole world." He said, "My patriotism is subservient to my religion."

But could such a doctrine be taught hundreds of millions? And, if taught, dared he to release this chain-reaction that might sweep a continent? He was later to behold the passions of men, unready to love their enemy, move with terrifying brutality and ruthless killing. He had only the power of love left, and he revealed it in a fast, to the death if necessary, as a penance for the sins of his people. And he broke their

hearts and won their love and loyalty. The world is hardly aware of the greatness of a saint who could dramatize the resistance of love in the Salt March and challenge the power of an Empire; who could still the murderous strife of communal war; and again, by fasting, compel the Hindu to do justice to the Moslem, he himself braving peril and walking through the very streets of blood to live in a Mohammedan home. Doubters must face the facts: India is free, untouchability is abolished, the caste system is passing, woman stands in dignity and power, and though the bullets of an assassin silenced his voice, he speaks to the peoples of the world, and all men know he was God's man.

Satyagraha is more than passive resistance. It is active. Love is directed toward the enemy. It is more than civil disobedience. It has a redemptive quality. "The Satyagrahi," said Gandhi, "must always be ready to die with a smile on his face, without retaliation, without rancor in his heart."

Account for it as one may, this little man was able to put that spirit into the hearts of millions. His word shook the nation. Not that Indians agreed with his every word. There were long and bitter controversies; and he did die at the hand of a Hindu assassin. He knew his limitations, and humbly confessed them: "The only virtue I want to claim is Truth and Non-violence. I lay no claim to super-human powers. I want none. I wear the same corrupt flesh that the weakest of my fellow-beings wears, and am, therefore, as liable to err as any. My services have many limitations, but God has up to now blessed them, in spite of the imperfections. For confession of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before. I feel stronger for my confession. And the cause must prosper for the re-

tracing. Never has man reached his destination by deviation from the straight path." On one occasion, he called off the program of civil disobedience, stood the misunderstanding, and cleansed the movement.

He bowed to prison sentence as a man pronouncing a benediction.

He moved the masses with his ideas because he himself incarnated them. "I decline to be a slave to precedence or practice I cannot understand or defend on a moral basis." "So far as I can recollect, . . . I never resorted to untruth in my profession."

Nehru says, "Every reform he suggests, every advice that he gives to others, he straightway applies to himself. He is always beginning with himself, and his words and actions fit into each other like a glove on the hand. And so, whatever happens, he never loses his integrity, and there is always an organic completeness about his life and work. Even in his apparent failures, he has seemed to grow in stature."

Gandhi could speak to the masses of God, because he knew God; and could speak of the masses, because he knew the people as individuals. Nehru tells of Gandhi sending the leaders of the movement for freedom into the villages, there to interpret the new way.

He insisted that the means used in reform be consistent with the ends sought. He was convinced that good ends could not be won by bad means. His message was carried by convinced messengers to the peasants. The villagers and the city dwellers sensed solidarity, and they envisioned freedom won by weapons of the spirit. Gandhi would have none of "class war." He was suspicious of Marxism because of its association with violence. His was the way of non-violence,

of truth, of love. But he knew the people must be disciplined. Nehru quotes Umar Sobani, who called Gandhi the "beloved slave driver." But the discipline was of the spirit. The Apostle Paul states, "The aim of Christian discipline is the love that springs from a pure heart, a sincere faith, and a good conscience." So, too, Gandhi's. Says Nehru, "How he disciplined our lazy and demoralized people and made them work—not by force or any material inducement but by a gentle look and a soft word and, above all, by personal example."

This reformer knew that revolution is wrought by regeneration. His thought centered on purity, not power. He knew the meek would inherit. He matched violence with love. A saint might thus achieve, but could the people be trusted to endure beatings without returning blow for blow, could leaders be found who would face prison and death with equanimity?

Frederick B. Fisher in *That Strange Little Brown Man Gandhi* tells of the teaching by example. Two Indians had killed an English official in the Punjab, were captured, and condemned to death. Their friends demanded that Gandhi try to save their lives. Gandhi refused, saying, "I cannot condone the killing of anyone." The friends determined to kill Gandhi, and later rushing in upon him, were confronted by a little man unafraid. "You may take my life, if you wish, he said quietly. "It is all I have left. I have no property I can give you. All I have is love. . . . I'd give everything I have to help you, but I cannot. If I led our people to violence to avenge this political murder, I would be using the very methods of force I deplore. Kill me, if you like, . . . but I must stick to my truth. Love is stronger than Death."

Gandhi taught by example, but also by carefully prepared



curricular material. The Satyagrahi was told in simple terms precisely what to do in event of arrest or as a prisoner. His duties to the whole movement were clearly outlined. As an individual: (1) A Satyagrahi will harbor no anger; (2) He will suffer the anger of the opponent; (3) In doing so, he will put up with assaults from the opponent, never retaliate; but will not submit, out of fear of punishment or the like, to any order given in anger; and so on through nine similar directions. As a prisoner, he will behave courteously toward prison officials, and will observe all such discipline of the prison as is not contrary to self-respect; as, for instance, while he will salaam the officials in the usual manner, he will not perform any humiliating gyrations. He will take clearly cooked and cleanly served food, which is not contrary to his religion, and will refuse to take food insultingly served or served in unclean vessels; and so on through three commandments. As a member of the movement, he will joyfully obey all the orders issued by the leader of the corps, whether they please him or not. Similar directions for discipline and solidarity follow.

The spirit reached the people. In his Ashram, he trained youth to lead. They were the officers of a non-violent army. All candidates in the officers' training school had to take an eight-fold vow: truthfulness, non-violence, celibacy, control of the palate, non-stealing, non-possession, home-industry, fearlessness. The trained went out to train.

Bishop Fisher tells of the spirit and the children. "Outside a Bombay store, a small impertinent boy shrilly shouted to purchasers to buy nothing but Indian goods. Policemen swooped down, arrested the child as a picketer, and hauled him off to court where a short-tempered magistrate sentenced

him to four years' imprisonment. The child's name was Krishna Kant. He was nine years old. Snapped the magistrate: 'If you disobey orders in the reformatory, you will be whipped.' 'I am ready to die for Gandhi,' said Krishna Kant. The next day all India knew of Krishna Kant."

Yes, the Satyagrahi oath became known, to children and to sages. The philosopher Sir S. Radhakrishnan sums it up: "Gandhiji embodied the wounded pride of India, and in his Satyagrahais reflected the eternal patience of her wisdom. Gandhiji admits that submission to injustice is worse than suffering it. He tells us that we can resist through an act of non-violence, which is an active force. If blood be shed, let it be our blood. Cultivate the quiet courage of dying without killing; for man lives freely only by his readiness to die, if need be, at the hands of his brother, never by killing him. . . . When faced by crisis, they would prefer the four walls of a cell to a seat in the Cabinet or a tent on the battlefield. They would be prepared to stand against a wall, to be spat upon, to be stoned, to be shot. Gandhiji today is not a free man. You may crucify the body of such a man; but the light in him, which is from the divine flame of truth and love, cannot be put out."

Responsible reporters sent back the incredible story of blows suffered but not returned, submission to terrible beating without so much as raising the arms in defense. And when the marchers, the silent marchers, were met by machine guns and warned that to advance meant death, they moved forward. The guns spat the fire of death, and the marchers fell; but the fallen were replaced by men and women moving forward, who died in turn. Their places were taken by following ranks, until at last the British officer called out, "What can we do to

get you to stop?" Negley Farson, who reported the story for the Chicago *Daily News*, recorded the low voice of the Indian leader, who broke the silence for the first time, "So long as you point your guns at us, we will march. Rescind your order against our meeting, take your guns away . . . and we will disperse." "But that would be to surrender!" "Very well, then. We will march until every one of these thousands is dead." The guns were removed, and the crowd dissolved as it carried its wounded and dead away.

It was on March 12th, 1930, that Gandhi began the march from Sabarmati to Dandi. This was the famous Salt March. It was deliberate civil disobedience. The government had a salt monopoly. He would dramatize Indian refusal to obey British law, would inaugurate non-co-operation, by taking a cup of water from the sea and keep the deposit of salt as a symbol of the disobedience. He would accept arrest and imprisonment in love, and tens of thousands stood ready to follow him. The world watched that little procession, joined by thousands, as it pressed nearer and nearer the sea. An Empire was confronted by a man, a man who would not hate, who would not kill. The Empire imprisoned his body, but his mind and soul were free. Even the judge who sentenced him seemed in the very act to accept condemnation. Gandhi wrote to Lord Irwin, "Conversion of a nation that has consciously or unconsciously preyed upon another far more numerous, far more ancient, and no less cultured than itself is worth any amount of risk. I have deliberately used the word 'conversion,' for my ambition is no less than to convert the British people through non-violence and thus make them see the wrong they have done to India."

This is warfare of the spirit. A man pledged to truth, ready

to die for truth, who will not hate but will love those who despitefully use him and his people, who resists with a power called soul-force, but resists not alone to defend but to transform, this is a modern miracle, because the man won, and the conversion he sought was in large measure achieved. It is reform based on spiritual law scientifically determined, in which means and ends are one, and in which the reformer moves with the certainty that the universe works for him.

## V

Are principles of Gandhi such that they may be universally used? That the principles are universally true, Gandhi would insist to the very last. But are the methods used in applying the principles applicable to the world as well as to India? Sheean concludes that a "good deal of Gandhi's ethical and moral teaching was much too ascetic for general acceptance, either in India or anywhere else. He always insisted that he was not a saint, and that anybody could do what he did; he never made a rule for others that he did not obey himself, and it therefore seemed to him that the others could do likewise. He was wrong; . . . humanity may esteem all the virtues, but it is incapable of attaining them, except in individual example. The very respect paid to saints in the West and in the East is proof of the rarity. The three aims of Gandhi's endeavor—truth, non-violence (or love), and chastity—are alike in one thing, which is that the overwhelming majority of men cannot reach them in a pure form for long at a time." But he goes on to say, "It is my belief that Satyagraha can reach the Western world—that is, the world of individual freedom—through individuals and not masses. What the co-conscious Indian people, participating, beneath their multifarious ex-

ternal differences, in a common awareness of soul and over-soul were able to do under the magnetic influence of Gandhi, individual citizens of the democratic West may do by harkening to the word of Gandhi, by relating it to other words spoken in ages past, by considering the extremity of the world's peril, and by obeying the dictates of the individual conscience."

But there is a deeper question. Is the reform wrought by Gandhi and the Gandhian way capable of confronting totalitarianism with its reckless disregard for life and its philosophy that underlay Hitler's pagan declaration, "To the Christian doctrine of the infinite worth of the individual, I oppose with icy clarity the saving doctrine of the nothingness of the individual"? Had Gandhi lived under the Nazi tyranny rather than under British rule with its traditions of fair-play and its respect for personality, what would have happened to him? Would a court have listened to his plea? Or would storm-troopers have blotted him out in a blood purge in which all opposition was decapitated? And if he had been followed by thousands, would the Nazi have hesitated to kill the thousands? Six million Jews speak from the crematories and the self-dug trench-like graves! And under such a regime, could he have taught the people the ethics of non-resistance? Britain jailed perhaps a hundred thousand, and some were executed, but what of Buchenwald and Dachau? Is this a method that evil forces might use to propagate their faith, or would the acceptance of the method negate the faith? Is it a method free men can use as they confront the threat to infiltrate, or by invasion to impose an ideology that means tyranny? These are questions difficult to ask and hard to answer. Is there an answer? Prime Minister Atlee's proposal

cannot be accounted for solely in terms of Gandhi's movement. There was something back of Atlee. Atlee is a Christian, and has himself given a life to realize the Christian ideal in the social practices of a nation. True, with Atlee at 10 Downing Street and Gandhi at Sevagram, changes could be made that would enable two great people to part in peace and as friends. Sir Stafford Cripps was a Christian, a Socialist, a democrat. But what of Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin!

Would a Hitler blow accepted by Gandhi in forgiving smile have changed the heart of the dictator? What is the meaning of the Cross? "And I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me!" Is the truest expression of love the gift of a life for a friend? Is Hermann Hagedorn right in thinking of God bombarding the souls of men, just as the atomic scientists bombard the atom, and then once in a while the nucleus of the soul is split and power unlimited is released among men? Was Gandhi such an one? Was Jesus? Is it possible to release spiritual power in all men?

Gandhi was ready for the bombardment of the Lord. He was pure in heart. Did he see God? He was meek. He inherited India. He was persecuted for righteousness' sake. He was a peacemaker. He is indeed a child of God.

But for us? What is his meaning? He, as a reformer, gave man a new method. It is the method of revolutionary change wrought by the regenerating spirit of love, expressed by intelligent men in measures consistent with love and dedicated to the enrichment of personality. Is it a method that can be used by the selfish and the brutal? No, because it is impossible for men to love their enemies with hate and greed in their hearts. The power is dependent upon purity. Here is the baffling question of our day. Has Gandhi taken the Christ of

the West and demonstrated to the people of the East that the stone that the West rejected is to be chief of the corner? Who dares say that this man, ridiculed by millions, who faced the power of a great Empire, almost alone, and who with the sheer power of love dedicated to truth, trained millions in the way of non-violence and won freedom, could not face other power with similar success? But what if the evil power destroys the saint? Is the gospel that is to be preached to the nations incapable of rearing such men in sufficient quantity to guarantee such reform by such method?

Gandhi as social reformer may have but begun his work. He may be summoning the Christian West to its knees, there to re-examine its faith and to ask, Has this man of the East demonstrated that the Man of Galilee was in fact the Word become flesh and that, in his revelation of the will of God, lies not alone the vision of the Kingdom but the means of building it?

It was Gandhi who said, "The message of Jesus is contained in the Sermon on the Mount, unadulterated and taken as a whole. Even in connection with the Sermon on the Mount, my own humble interpretation of the message is in many respects different from the orthodox. . . . If . . . I had to face only the Sermon on the Mount and my interpretation of it, I should not hesitate to say, Oh, yes, I am a Christian, but I know that at the present moment, if I said any such thing, it would lay myself open to the gravest misinterpretation. . . . Much of that which passes as Christianity is a negation of the Sermon on the Mount. . . . I am not at the present moment speaking especially of Christian conduct; I am speaking of Christian belief, Christianity, as it is understood in the West. . . . There is one thing which came forcibly to me in

my early studies of the Bible. It seized me immediately when I read one passage. The text was this: 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things will be added unto you.' I tell you that if you will understand, appreciate, and act up to the spirit of that passage, then you will not even need to know what place Jesus, or any other teacher, occupies in your or my heart. If you will do this moral scavenger's work, so as to clean and purify your hearts and get them ready, you will find that all these mighty teachers will take their place without invitation from us. That, to my mind, is the basis of all sound education. The culture of the mind must be subservient to the culture of the heart. God help you to become pure . . . the teaching of the Sermon was meant for each and every one of us. You cannot serve both God and Mammon. God, the Compassionate, and the Merciful, who is Tolerance incarnate, allows Mammon to have his nine days' wonder. But I say . . . fly from that self-destructive but destructive show of Mammon which I see around me today. For you cannot serve Mammon and God together."



Chapter V . . . . . The Missionary as  
Social Reformer

## *Albert Schweitzer*

STRICTLY SPEAKING, ALBERT SCHWEITZER IS NOT A SOCIAL reformer. Unlike Sidney and Beatrice Webb, whose researches and teaching, personal leadership and influence were chiefly responsible for the setting up of powerful educational institutions, propaganda bodies and a political party, and whose lives contributed to the reform that marked the passing of Britain from a capitalist to a socialist society, Schweitzer has spent most of his years in a faraway mission station. True, his scholarship has been recognized, but he has not released a movement such as Walter Rauschenbusch did in his proclamation of the social gospel, nor has he administered such vast reforming enterprise as David Lilienthal did in the Tennessee Valley, or been charged with responsibility such as that resting upon the chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission. No nation has waited breathlessly upon his word. No people have bowed to his will as did India when, upon a bed in a prison cell, Gandhi fasted both as penance and persuasion, risking all upon the power of love to transform. No people has been freed because of his labors. Nonetheless, he stands as a social reformer, changing the thinking of men by the sheer power of his example, a servant in the house, whose influence cleanses

of iniquity. Men whom he has never met are asking, Is this the Way? Are talents a trust? Is life found by losing it? It is the reforming power of a great example. He judges no man, but his life forces every man to judge himself. He does not shout, "Abolish the exploitation of man by man." He goes to Africa to give himself as a part payment on a debt to the black man, who has been exploited. He does not talk of a "classless society." He serves the least of these. And he stands strong in the storm of sacrificial service. The winds of adversity have beat upon him, and the bright light of God's approval has shone upon him. He has borne physical burdens and suffered anguish of the spirit. But he has carried on with light in his eyes, laughter upon his lips, strength in his soul; and men have seen and wondered. His influence moves quietly across the seas. Strong men ponder, lives are changed, and the changed move into society for further change. A man in the forest, a surgeon with a knife, a musician at the keyboard, a scholar with his books, but more, so much more, a man of God who affirms love and life, and reforms.

## I

Albert Schweitzer concludes his great work, *The Quest of the Historical Jesus*, with these striking words, "He comes to us as One unknown, without a name, as of old, by the lakeside, He came to those men who knew Him not. He speaks to us the same word: 'Follow thou me!' and sets us to the tasks which He has to fulfil for our time. He commands. And to those who obey Him, whether they be wise or simple, He will reveal Himself in the toils, the conflicts, the sufferings which they shall pass through in His fellowship, and, as an

ineffable mystery, they shall learn in their own experience Who He is." This is Schweitzer, the mystic, speaking.

"Anyone who ventures to look the historical Jesus straight in the face and to listen for what He may have to teach him in His powerful sayings, soon ceases to ask what this strange-seeming Jesus can still be to him. He learns to know Him as One who claims authority over him.

"The true understanding of Jesus is the understanding of will acting on will. The true relation to Him is to be taken possession of by Him. Christian piety of any and every sort is valuable only so far as it means the surrender of our will to His." This is Schweitzer, the religious teacher! But he is also philosopher. His definition of ethics is clear and convincing. He has been discussing the principle "reverence for life" and says, "Just as in my own will-to-live there is a yearning for more life, and for that mysterious exaltation of the will-to-live which is called pleasure, and terror in face of annihilation and that injury to the will-to-live which is called pain; so the same obtains in all the will-to-live around me, equally whether it can express itself to my comprehension or whether it remains unvoiced.

"Ethics thus consists in this, that I experience the necessity of practicing the same reverence for life toward all will-to-live, as toward my own. Therein I have already the needed fundamental principle of morality. It is *good* to maintain and cherish life; it is *evil* to destroy and to check life." There is something of Gandhi in one of his statements right in the midst of heavy philosophical reasoning: "Anything that I acquire by acting contrary to my convictions is bought too dearly." Schweitzer sees inner perfection "in the attainment of a spir-

ituality measured by its continually deepening veneration for life."

His approach to life is affirmative. He calls for reverence for Life, "based on the will-to-live." But this will-to-live must be conscious and reflective. "Reverence for life never allows the individual to give up his interest in the world. It is continually urging him to take part in all the life around him, and to feel responsible for it." As we confront life, Schweitzer insists, "It is further asked of us that we should strive to bring it to its highest degree of value in every respect." "The real essence of civilization consists in the continual struggle to develop itself in the individual man and in humanity, of that reverence for life which is always trying to make its influence felt in the will-to-live." "Reverence for life, considered as an ideal of human existence, material and spiritual, demands that man should strive—by the fullest possible development of all his capacities, and in a spirit of spiritual freedom as extensive as possible—to be true to himself and to take part in all the life around him as a bringer of sympathy and help." The philosopher spoke out in devastating answer to the Hitlers, the Mussolinis, and the Stalins before power had been seized to back their theories. "As a spiritual aid in this battle, we may offer, then, the general principle that it is wrong to sacrifice a single man to environmental conditions, seeing that this involves his being regarded as a mere human *thing*. The conviction, formulated by so-called thinkers, and popularized in impossible ways, has become current among us, that culture is destined to be the possession of an *élite*, and from the point of view of the masses, is only a means by which to exploit these. And so the spiritual aid to which they have a claim is denied to those who have to struggle for their humanity. The

realist philosophy to which we have hitherto assented deliberately teaches this. But reverence for life enters the field against it and creates a mental atmosphere in which the human dignity which the circumstances of life would deny him is made possible for every human being by the convictions of his fellows."

This is the stuff of reform, and such ideas let loose in the thinking of men mean change in the actions of men. This the philosopher knew. He said, "A spiritualization of the masses is what we need. The vast number of individuals must learn to reflect about their life, and about that which they desire to gain for their life in the struggle for existence, about that which circumstances make difficult for them, and about that which they deny themselves. . . . But once let the idea of reverence for life become a familiar thought with us and we shall have in it a mental force which will work steadily on its whole environment, and a spirituality will become active which will show results in every direction. . . . The greatest possible material freedom for the greatest possible number is one of the first demands of civilization." "Reverence for life is alone in a position to create the moral atmosphere necessary for this purpose, one of understanding and faith, in the strength of which we are united for a definite end, and by means of which we attain as much power over circumstances as can ever be possible." Is this the speech of reformer or of philosopher? It is, of course, both. He says, "We should mutually renounce the power to injure each other which we now possess. But this is necessarily a spiritual act." Gandhi knew that. Schweitzer adds, "We must turn together to will the spiritual progress of man and of humanity in mutual accord and to base our hopes on it once more. . . . We shall

only be capable of this as the result of intelligent reverence for life." Thus he speaks in, *The Philosophy of Civilization*, particularly in part two, which he calls, *Civilization and Ethics*. In part one, *The Decay and the Restoration of Civilization*, after a closely reasoned but also emotionally gripping plea for "a strong and worthy theory of the universe," he laid foundation for these views. "It is only in his struggle to become ethical that man comes to possess real value as a personality. . . . The root-idea of my theory of the universe is that my relation to my own being and to the objective world is determined by reverence for life." Is it Marx or Schweitzer who says, "The artisan who was his own master becomes the factory hand through the compulsion of machinery. Because in the complicated business world of to-day only undertakings with abundant capital behind them can maintain their existence, the place of the small independent dealer is being taken more and more completely by the employee. . . .

"The lack of freedom which results is made worse still because the factory system creates continually growing agglomerations of people who are thereby compulsorily separated from the soil which feeds them, from their own homes and from nature. Hence comes serious psychical injury." It was Schweitzer, not Marx. Did the missionary once live in the apartments of great cities? He writes, "We meet each other continually, and in the most varied relations as strangers. Our circumstances do not allow us to deal with each other as man to man." Then, he brings his readers up with a start, "Wherever there is lost the consciousness that every man is an object of concern for just because he is man, civilization and morals are shaken, and the advance to fully developed inhumanity is only a question of time."

What do such ponderings mean? Are they not at once a clear tocsin to men of free societies and a clearer knell to men who maintain tyranny?

"Our society," he writes, "has also ceased to allow to all men, as such, a human value and a human dignity; many sections of the human race have become merely raw material and property in human form. . . . And what an amount of insulting stuff, some decently veiled, has made its appearance during the last decades, and passed for truth and reason in our colonial literature and our parliaments, and so become an element in general public opinion!" "External organization is developed at the expense of spiritual life. Personality and ideas are then subordinated to institutions, when it is really these which ought to influence the latter and keep them inwardly alive." He condemns contemporary fallacy lying in the assumption "that with new institutions there would arise a new spirit." "Our institutions are a failure because the spirit of barbarism is at work in them. . . . The difficult problems with which we have to deal . . . are in the last resort only to be solved by an inner change of character." "Where the collective body works more strongly on the individual than the latter does upon it, the result is deterioration, because the noble element on which everything depends, viz., the spiritual and moral worthiness of the individual, is thereby necessarily constricted and hampered."

## II

What manner of man is this missionary, who speaks as mystic and as theologian, as philosopher and as artist; and who speaks most compellingly as a humble servant at a black man's bed or a dedicated surgeon at an operating table? J.

Middleton Murry, in his *The Challenge of Schweitzer*, sees in Schweitzer a twofold challenge, "First, the moral and spiritual challenge of a life deliberately devoted to the service and succor of the African native;" and second the challenge of his philosophy of religion and his philosophy of ethics. Murry is blessed by the life, but dismayed by the ethics. He approaches Schweitzer almost reverently, but finds in the conception of the Kingdom of God, the law of love, and in the faith that man can build a better society as well as develop nobler character, a truer world view than that lying in reverence for life, world-and-life affirmation, and the discounting of the place of social institutions. He concludes his study, "My faith in the free society is rooted in my conception of Jesus, Schweitzer's disregard of it is rooted in his. Would that the known and personal Jesus shone as manifest in my works as the unknowable and impersonal Jesus shines in his!" Without becoming involved in discussion of Christology, biblical criticism, world view and social theory, it is not too difficult to behold the man, to see the life, and perhaps to find the Christ, if there be but eyes to see, and ears to hear.

He was born January 14, 1875, at Kaysersberg in Upper Alsace. "When I was five years old, my father began giving me music lessons on the old square piano which we had inherited from grandfather Schillinger." His father was a minister. Schweitzer was to become one of the world's great musicians, an authority on Bach, an organist of renown. When but eight years of age, he requested a New Testament from his father and was given one. "Among the stories which interested me most was that of the Wise Men from the East. What did the parents of Jesus do, I asked myself, with the gold and other valuables that they got from those wise men? How



could they have been poor after that? And that the Wise Men should never have troubled themselves again about the Child Jesus was to me incomprehensible. The absence, too, of any record of the Shepherds of Bethlehem becoming disciples, gave me a severe shock." It was little wonder that a boy of eight with such queries grew up to be a doctor of theology and one of the foremost of biblical scholars. He was but nine when he took the place of the organist for a service at Günsbach, and sixteen when he first heard Wagner's *Tannhäuser*—"this music overpowered me to such an extent that it was days before I was capable of giving proper attention to the lessons in school." No wonder he was later to write his monumental volume on J. S. Bach, as well as essays on organ-building.

In his twenties, he had earned the doctorate in music, theology and in philosophy, the latter after the completion of his thesis on the religious philosophy of Kant, when he was twenty-four. The multiplied activities of this man of genius are incredible. The work in music, philosophy and theology is pursued simultaneously. He accepts a position as preacher at the Church of St. Nicholas. Seaver, his biographer, quotes him as saying, "For to me preaching was a necessity of my being. I felt it as something wonderful that I was allowed to address a congregation every Sunday about the deepest questions of life, . . . [but] even today I am never quite free from shyness before a large audience." His sermons were written in full, and he rejoiced in the confirmation classes and the sermons to children. His discourses to adults were very brief, and some complained to the "Inspector in Spiritual Matters." The inspector was embarrassed to call Schweitzer in and asked what he should report. Schweitzer replied, "that he

might say I was only a poor Curate who stopped speaking when he found he had nothing more to say about the text." He was admonished not to speak less than twenty minutes. His progress is rapid, his talent recognized. He is appointed Principal of the Theological College of St. Thomas, attached to the University of Strassburg, at twenty-eight. His life is full of privilege, joy, and attainment. When but twenty-one, he had taken upon himself a decision, that might be called a vow. He had become a professor at twenty-one, had pushed forward the work in music as his studies for the doctorate in philosophy developed: "My thesis for the Doctorate suffered in no way through the demands made on me, either by my art or by society, for my good health allowed me to be prodigal with night work. It happened sometimes that I played to Widor [his instructor] in the morning without having been to bed at all. To investigate the literature about Kant's philosophy of religion in the 'Bibliothèque Nationale' proved to be impractical on account of the cumbersome regulations of the Reading Room. I therefore resolved, without more ado, to write the thesis without troubling about the literature, and to see what results I could get by burying myself in the Kantian writings themselves."

But what of the vow! His lectures were successful. His researches in the life of Jesus were becoming significant. He had a good income. His book on Bach was written in French. Surely a full life and a significant one. But the vow! He had been meditating. "What have I done to deserve this? . . . To whom much is given of him shall much be required." In the beauty of an early summer's morning, with its bright sun and the song of birds, he reached the conclusion, "I must not accept this happiness as a matter of course, but must give some-

thing in exchange for it." Then followed the vow that he would give himself to study and teaching, to science and to music, until he was thirty years of age. Then, as circumstances made possible, he would give himself to the direct service of humanity "as man to my fellow-men."

### III

Schweitzer kept that vow! Oscar Kraus, in *Albert Schweitzer and His Philosophy*, writes: "Schweitzer *lives* his philosophy of compassion; it is compassion in action; he only feels pity for others, never for himself." He kept the vow but not without overcoming initial opposition from his friends and the day-by-day battle against nature, ignorance, and greed in the years that followed: "My relatives and my friends all joined in expostulating with me on the folly of my enterprise. I was a man, they said, who was burying the talent entrusted to him and wanted to trade with false currency. Work among savages I ought to leave to those who would not thereby be compelled to leave gifts and acquirements in science and art unused. . . . A lady who was filled with the modern spirit proved to me that I could do much more by lecturing on behalf of medical help for natives than I could by the action I contemplated." "How much I suffered through so many people assuming a right to tear open all the doors and shutters of my inner self! . . .

"I felt as a real kindness the action of persons who made no attempt to dig their fists into my heart, but regarded me as a precocious young man, not quite right in his head, and treated me correspondingly with affectionate mockery." But the vow had been made "one brilliant summer morning at Gunsbach, during the Whitsuntide holidays." Many a time

he had tried to settle what meaning lay for him in the saying of Jesus, "Whosoever would save his life shall lose it, and whosoever shall lose his life for My sake and the Gospel's shall save it." He found his answer in the vow. "In addition to the outward, I now had inward happiness. . . . One thing only was certain, that it must be directly human service, however inconspicuous the sphere of it." He had tried to serve tramps and discharged prisoners. Then came the resolution that expressed the vow. "One morning in the autumn of 1904 I found on my writing-table in the College one of the green-covered magazines in which the Paris Missionary Society reported . . . its activities. . . . I was specially interested in this Society on account of the impression made on me by the letters of one of its earliest missionaries, Casalis by name, when my father read them aloud at his missionary services during my childhood." He opened the magazine mechanically turning the pages. His eyes caught an article, "The needs of the Congo Mission." The article concluded with the words, "Men and women who can reply simply to the Master's call, 'Lord, I am coming' those are the people whom the Church needs." He determined that he would become a doctor and go. But why become a doctor, why not go as a scholar, a teacher? "I wanted to be a doctor that I might be able to work without having to talk. For years I had been giving myself out in words, and it was with joy that I had followed the calling of theological teacher and of preacher. But this new form of activity I could not represent to myself as being talking about the religion of love, but only as an actual putting it into practice."

## IV

So, at thirty, he begins the study of medicine. "Now began years of continuous struggle with fatigue," he writes. He could not bring himself to resign his teaching and preaching, "So while I studied medicine, I, at the same time, delivered theological lectures, and preached almost every Sunday. The lectures were especially laborious at the beginning of my medical course, as it was in them that I began dealing with the problems of the teachings of S. Paul." He continued his music, met his obligations by taking the organ-part of the Paris Bach Society concerts. "Many a sermon for S. Nicholas did I sketch out in the train between Paris and Strassburg!" "I now played oftener in concerts, not only because I had during recent years become known as an organist, but also because the loss of my stipend as Principal of the Theological College compelled me to find some new source of income." "It was during the first months of my medical course that I wrote the essay on Organ-building and the final chapter of the *Quest of the Historical Jesus*." He was indeed acquainted with fatigue, in fact, as the years passed, he was to become a very good friend.

Schweitzer found in science a spiritual experience. He was inspired by a method that demanded every statement be justified with facts. An inventive imagination had its place in the "endless duels" of theological and historical disputation, but "dealing with realities which could be determined with exactitude," delighted him. But the philosopher and the theologian did not bow to the scientist. He wrote: "The knowledge that results from the recording of single manifestations of Being remains ever incomplete and unsatisfying so far as it is unable to give the final answer to the great question of

what we are in the Universe, and to what purpose we exist in it. We can find our right place in the Being that envelops us only if we experience in our individual lives the universal life which wills and rules within it. The nature of the living Being without me I can understand only through the living Being which is within me. It is to this reflective knowledge of the Universal Being and of the relation to it of the individual human being that the Humanities seek to attain. The results they reach contain truth so far as the spirit which is creatively active in this direction possesses a sense of reality, and has passed through the stage of gaining a knowledge of facts about Being to reflection about the nature of Being."

It is 1911 before he takes the State Medical Examination. He, of course, passes. A man of lesser vitality could not have kept the vow. Then followed the year of practical work as a volunteer in the hospitals, and the writing of his thesis for the doctorate. Certain writers had argued that Jesus was a victim of mental derangement, and Schweitzer determined to see whether from the medical standpoint the Messianic consciousness of Jesus was bound up with psychiatric disturbance. His thesis is available in English under the title, *The Psychiatric Study of Jesus*, and the conclusions of his research appear upon a single page and are a devastating refutation of the arguments of this body of critics.

He collects funds for the enterprise, turns from medicine and theological research to catalogues, records, packing cases. He was ready to go. But the orthodox objected. The committee invited him to an examination. Schweitzer the scholar, the theologian, the artist, the physician! He refused on the ground that Jesus had required nothing of the disciples but a willingness to follow him. He did agree to call upon each member

as an individual. "My proposal was accepted and cost me several afternoons. A few members gave me a chilly reception." He assured them he simply wanted to be a doctor, and that in everything else he would be, "As mute as a fish." And at last he was accepted. "In the afternoon of Good Friday, 1913, my wife and I left Gunsbach; in the evening of March 26th, we embarked at Bordeaux."

"I had read about the physical miseries of the natives in the virgin forests," he writes, "I had heard about them from missionaries, and the more I thought about it the stranger it seemed to me that we Europeans trouble ourselves so little about the great humanitarian task which offers itself to us in far-off lands. The parable of Dives and Lazarus seemed to me to have been spoken directly to us! We are Dives, for, through the advances of medical science, we now know a great deal about disease and pain, and have innumerable means of fighting them: yet we take as a matter of course the incalculable advantages which this new wealth gives us! Out there in the colonies, however, sits wretched Lazarus, the coloured folk, who suffers from illness and pain just as much as we do, nay, much more, and has absolutely no means of fighting them. And just as Dives sinned against the poor man at his gate because for want of thought he never put himself in his place and let his heart and conscience tell him what he ought to do, so do we sin against the poor man at our gate."

## V

After the journey follows this entry: It is from the book, *On the Edge of the Primeval Forest*. "River and forest . . . ! Who can really describe the first impression they make? We seemed to be dreaming! Pictures of antediluvian scenery



which elsewhere had seemed to be merely the creation of fancy, are now seen in real life. It is impossible to say where the river ends and the land begins, for a mighty network of roots, clothed with bright flowering creepers, projects right into the water. Clumps of palms and palm trees, ordinary trees spreading out widely with green boughs and huge leaves, single trees of the pine family shooting up to a towering height in between them, wide fields of papyrus clumps as tall as a man, with big fan-like leaves, and amid all this luxuriant greenery the rotting stems of dead giants shooting up to heaven. . . . In every gap in the forest a water mirror meets the eye; at every bend in the river a new tributary shows itself. A heron flies heavily up and then settles on a dead tree-trunk; white birds and blue birds skim over the water, and high in the air a pair of ospreys circle. Then—yes, there can be no mistake about it!—from the branch of a palm there hang and swing—two monkey tails! Now the owners of the tails are visible. We are really in Africa!”

They reach Lambarene. The chapter ends, “At six o’clock next morning the bell rings; the hymn sung by the children in the schoolroom is soon heard, and we prepare to begin our new work in our new home.” The *we* are a doctor and his devoted wife, trained as a nurse. The vow became flesh, and soon a primitive people were to know that it dwelt among them. A man and a woman put themselves right up against the pain of a continent. A scholar stands against superstition and ignorance, blacker than the skin of the black men. A theologian, whose faith had been questioned, begins his labors in the name of our Lord. A musician, whose fingers had called forth beauty from the famous organs of Europe, plays new compositions and his fingers find a feeble pulse, his hands the



fevered brow. A teacher who gave himself wholly to the great Teacher, like his master heals the sick. The scientific learning of the greatest laboratories is incarnate in a great body, a great mind, a great soul. And a missionary, by the sheer force of example, begins a reform. No new society is envisioned except as changed hearts mean changed outlook, and changed outlook means a changed order. The surgeon's knife saved life, and the surgeon's mind stilled fears; but the terrifying hold of ancient custom and of a world peopled with evil spirits was like the jungle growth, ever ready to creep back upon the clearing and destroy the evidences of civilization. He knew that outward change was necessary, but held that it must be expressive of inward change. The man who could speak in simple sermon to the native people—after the fears of the orthodox at home had subsided—was the man who in his *Philosophy of Civilization* said, "The final decision as to what the future of a society shall be depends not on how near its organization is to perfection, but on the degrees of worthiness in its individual members."

It is not until 1927 that he can write: "For the first time since I came to Africa my patients are housed as human beings should be. How I have suffered during these years from having to pen them together in stifling, dark rooms! Full of gratitude I look up to God who has allowed me to experience such a joy. With deep emotion, too, I thank the friends in Europe, in reliance upon whose help I could venture to move the hospital, and replace the bamboo huts with corrugated iron wards." Fourteen years of heroic service in the tropics, with heavy labor in unbearable heat and delicate surgery in poorly lighted operating room; felling trees and laying foundations, removing tumors and setting broken bones; fighting

beasts of forest and menacing creatures of the streams, battling the microscopic enemies carrying disease and death, and struggling to keep those he served from polluting the water upon which all depended; never enough of help or supply; writing necessary regulations and ceaselessly seeking to overcome their violation by the ignorant, the playful, the vicious; trying to heal by the methods of science but serving a people who knew sickness was caused by an evil spirit; resolutely fighting back as nature with its dampness destroyed his medicines—hearing an old chief say, “Our country devours its own children,” and having to fight the acceptance of fate as well as the inertia of the people—heroic, is there no better word for such a man! He is at the task of building: “How carefully I have to watch to see that the natives do not injure the beams and the planks! And what a labour it is to draw all the nails out of the wood and to hammer them straight so that they can be used again!” In the year the new hospital came, he was forced to write, “This year I can give to writing even less time than I could last year. . . . I have no energy for anything beyond practicing regularly on my piano with pedal attachment.”

After years of struggle, when even a Schweitzer might have anticipated a lessening of the burden, a few sentences chosen at random from the record *The Forest Hospital at Lambarene* reveal the reforming power of the vow incarnate, a reform that moves in upon the hearts of men and women thousands of miles from Lambarene, men and women who live in comfort in so-called civilized lands, and they ask, What doth the Lord require of me? “One is seized with an indescribable sympathy with these poor strangers. And how often the sympathy is quite hopeless, since it is evident at the first glance that

the visitor will draw his last breath here, far away from his own people, who are waiting for his return and for the money he ought to bring with him. . . . The rules which govern life for the hospital inmates are to them mere words which do not concern them."

"A poor savage . . . came to us with a strangulated hernia. We had to place him on the operating table without being able to explain to him what we were going to do, and while he was being fixed in position horror painted itself on his face; he certainly believed that he had fallen among cannibals! But with the anesthetic there came an end to his terror, and when he woke, free from his torturing pain, an understanding look spread over his face, and he gave us a smile of gratitude. But alas! it was impossible to save his life. Never have I used the operating knife with such deep emotion as I did that day."

They are so overwhelmed with work that "the humanity within us cannot come out properly. But we cannot help it. For the present we are condemned to the trying task of carrying on the struggle with sickness and pain, and to that everything else has to give way." It is seldom that Schweitzer mentions his own pain. But at the beginning of 1925 he records: "I am suffering more than ever from the ulcers on my feet, which are spreading. I cannot get a shoe on, so I drag myself about in wooden shoes. We get through the work after a fashion, but that is all. . . . Each evening the new doctor and I take spades and level a portion of the site. . . . On January 27th Miss Kothman [a nurse] and I together just escaped death by drowning." Another entry: "How difficult to write are the letters in which I have to tell the relatives of a European who has died here about his last days and his death!"

The record is full of scientific research and experimentation.

"Elephantiasis, too has its turn on the table. On April 1st we attack a growth weighing seventy-two pounds, on a man from near Samkita." Sleeping sickness, dysentery, disease of every kind, a missionary doctor with a microscope against the millions. No wonder he was forced one day to write: "In my despair at some . . . who had once more been drawing polluted water, I threw myself into a chair in the consulting room and groaned out: 'What a blockhead I was to come out here to doctor savages like these!' Whereupon Joseph, [an African assistant] quietly remarked: 'Yes, Doctor, here on earth you are a great blockhead, but not in heaven.'"

"In the middle of September, we get the first rains, and the cry is to bring all building timber under cover. As we have in the hospital hardly a man capable of work, I begin, assisted by two local helpers, to haul beams and planks myself. Suddenly I catch sight of a Negro in a white suit sitting by a patient whom he has come to visit. 'Hullo! friend,' I call out, 'won't you lend us a hand?' 'I am an intellectual and don't drag wood about,' came the answer. 'You're lucky,' I reply. 'I too wanted to become an intellectual, but I didn't succeed.'"

## VI

Such is the story, the never-ending story. Back in the first days, he wrote: "Sleeping-sickness prevails more widely here than I suspected at first. . . . The hut for sleeping-sickness victims is now in course of erection. . . . When I am not myself superintending the labourers whom we have secured for grubbing, . . . nothing is done. For whole afternoons I have to neglect the sick to play the part of foreman there."

The page headings in his first African book tell the story of the service, and suggest the suffering of soul: Mental

maladies, poison, fetishism, drugs and their cost, leprosy, cholera, malaria, termites, traveler ants. Of traveler ants he writes: "On their great migrations they march five or six abreast in perfect order, and I once watched a column near my house which took thirty-six hours to march past. If their course is over open ground and they have to cross a path, the warriors form up in several rows on either side and with their large jaws form a kind of palisade to protect the procession, in which the ordinary traveler ants are carrying the young ones with them. In forming the palisade the warriors turn their backs to the procession—like the Cossacks when protecting the Czar—and in that position they remain hours at a time.

"As a rule there are three or four columns marching abreast of each other, but independently, from five to fifty yards apart. All at once they break up the column and disperse, though how the word of command is given we do not yet know. Anyhow, in the twinkling of an eye a huge area is covered with a quivering, black mass, and every living thing upon it is doomed. Even the great spiders in the trees cannot escape, for these terrible ravagers creep after them in crowds up to the very highest twigs; and if the spiders, in despair, jump from the trees, they fall victims to the ants on the ground. It is a horrible sight. The militarism of the forest will very nearly bear comparison with that of Europe!"

It was that militarism that broke in upon his work in 1914. He had immediately learned that physical misery among the natives was greater than even he had anticipated, and he rejoiced in the fact that in defiance of advice he had equipped himself to serve as a doctor. His observations result in generalizations: "Among the primitives age always connotes poverty."

"The indifference of primitive man towards persons he does not know is beyond anything we can conceive."

His labor is lightened and his musicianship conserved by a resolve. The Paris Bach Society had presented him with a magnificent piano with pedal attachment, built especially for the Tropics. "At first, however, I had not the heart to practice. I had accustomed myself to think that this activity in Africa meant the end of my life as an artist, and that the renunciation would be easier if I allowed fingers and feet to get rusty with disuse. One evening, however, as, in a melancholy mood, I was playing one of Bach's organ fugues, the idea came suddenly upon me that I might after all use my free hours in Africa for the very purpose of perfecting and deepening my technique. I immediately formed a plan to take, one after another, compositions by Bach, Mendelssohn, Widor, Cesar Frank, and Max Reger, study them carefully down to the smallest detail, and learn them by heart, even if I had to spend weeks or months on any particular piece. How I enjoyed being able to practice at leisure and in quiet, without any slavery to time through being due to play concerts, even though occasionally, I could not find more than a bare half-hour in the day for the purpose!"

"I found preaching a great joy." But had he not promised to be mute as a fish? Was not the Missionary Society fearful of his doctrine? He writes: "As I had expected the questions of dogma on which the Missionary Society's committee in Paris had laid so much weight played practically no part in the sermons of the missionaries. If they wanted to be understood by their hearers they could do nothing beyond preaching the simple Gospel of becoming freed from the world by the spirit of Jesus, the Gospel which comes to us in the Sermon

on the Mount and the finest sayings of Paul. Necessity compelled them to put forward Christianity as before all else an ethical religion. . . . As I did not make the smallest attempt to foist any theological views upon them, they soon laid aside all mistrust of me and rejoiced, as did I also on my side, that we were united in the piety of obedience to Jesus, and in the will to simple Christian activity." Thus not many months after his arrival, he was invited to take part in preaching and released from the promise given in Paris.

But on August 5th, 1914, he was informed that he was a prisoner of war, confined to his house, denied all intercourse with white or black, and ordered to obey without question orders of black soldiers assigned as guards. The natives could not comprehend the meaning or the extent of the war. "As soon as it became known that of the white men who used to live on the Ogowe ten had already fallen, an old savage remarked: 'What, so many men killed already in this war! Why don't their tribes meet to talk out the palaver? How can they ever pay for all these dead men?'" For in native warfare, Schweitzer remarks, "those who fall, whether among the conquerors or the conquered, have to be paid for by the opposite side. This same savage expressed the criticism that Europeans kill each other merely out of cruelty, because of course they don't want to eat the dead."

And so the man who had gone to Africa in the name of Christ to free the suffering from pain is now forced to suffer the denial of freedom, a suffering the more intense because of the sickness of his wife. Another prisoner of the Lord. A simple sentence is revelatory of the man. "So, on the second day of my internment, still quite amazed at being able to sit down at my writing-table early in the morning as in the

days before I took up medicine, I set to work on the 'Philosophy of Civilization.' "

Strictly speaking, to repeat, Schweitzer is not a social reformer. True, a section of Africa was changed, but no party marches under his leadership, no bill in Congress bears his name, we do not hear of the economics of Schweitzer nor of the political principles of this missionary. But he does reform. He closes his autobiography with an observation, "If men can be found who revolt against the spirit of thoughtlessness, and who are personalities sound enough and profound enough to let the ideals of ethical progress radiate from them as a force, there will start an activity of the spirit which will be strong enough to evoke a new mental and spiritual disposition in mankind." He stands among his fellow-workers and beside them he serves, a personality sound enough and profound enough, and there radiates from him a force that has already started an action in the realm of the spirit that in the name of his Lord means change, the change that is reform, the reform that is regeneration.

Yes, he is profound enough. He writes, "Christianity cannot take the place of thinking, but it must be founded on it." Yes, he is sound enough. He says, "The essential element in Christianity as it was preached by Jesus and as it is comprehended by thought, is this, that it is only through love that we can attain to communion with God. All living knowledge of God rests upon this foundation: that we experience Him in our lives as Will-to-Love."

The fears of the Paris Committee can be understood from one point of view. They are incomprehensible from another. They had final answers to many problems, neatly arranged in propositions admitting of no change. His view was of



another nature. He says, "Anyone who has recognized that the idea of Love is the spiritual beam of light which reaches us from the Infinite, ceases to demand from religion that it shall offer him complete knowledge of the supra-sensible. He ponders, indeed, on the great questions: what the meaning is of the evil in the world; how in God, the great First Cause, the will to create and the will-to-love are one; in what relation the spiritual and the material life stand to one another, and in what way our existence is transitory and yet eternal. But he is able to leave these questions on one side, however painful it may be to give up all hope of answers to them. In the knowledge of spiritual existence in God through love he possesses the one thing needful. 'Love never faileth: but . . . whether there be knowledge it shall be done away,' says S. Paul."

Differ as intellectually honest men may with Schweitzer's consideration of Christology, accept or reject his insistence upon explanations in terms of eschatology, all must agree with his statement, "I am certain that truthfulness in all things belongs to the spirit of Jesus." He says, "The historical Jesus moves us deeply by His subordination to God. In this He stands out as greater than the Christ personality of dogma which, in compliance with the claims of Greek metaphysics, is conceived as omniscient and incapable of error." No severer examination of Schweitzer's theology has been made than that of J. Middleton Murry, who finds riches in the historic faith and poverty in Schweitzer's departure from the historical formulations, but even Murry declares almost in adoration, "If Christ is anywhere in the world today, he is in Schweitzer at Lambarene, and Schweitzer in him."

## VI

Reverence for life, reverence for life, reverence for life, this is the theme of the great symphony that is Schweitzer. This is why even in 1942, when more adequate financial support came, he refused to take furlough. Hermann Hagedorn, in the biography that is a poem, writes, "The natives were coming as before the War, in a steady stream. 'You want me to take a vacation,' Schweitzer wrote to Dr. Skillings. 'It can't be done. If the hospital is to function normally, I must be in my place every day for many reasons.' " "Believe, dear friend, that I am doing the right thing staying at my post, doing my work day by day and dreaming that a day will come when, after the war, I shall take a real vacation, when I shall sleep as long as I like, when I shall go for walks, when I shall work all day long and half the night at philosophy without having to break up the concentration, when I shall play the organ . . . Don't worry about me."

Reverence for life. In his first postwar report, he wrote, "So we carried on." Reverence for life. He knows that the modern state can only be cleansed if a new spirit rules. "Let us, then, undertake to drive the modern state, so far as the power of our thought reaches, into the spirituality and the morality of the civilized state, as it should be in accordance with the conception of Reverence for Life." "With confidence in the strength of the civilized spirit and temper which springs from Reverence for Life we take upon ourselves the task of making this civilized state an actuality . . . a state guided by an ethical consciousness."

In the memorial address delivered in Frankfort on the Main, upon the celebration of the one hundredth anniversary of the

birth of Goethe, Schweitzer discusses Goethe's man and quotes:

To self be true, and true to others. . . .  
Let thy search be in affection,  
And thy living be thy deed.

His living has been a deed, at once revelatory of complete surrender to Christ and of reverence for life. "What is Reverence for Life?" he asks. "The most immediate fact of man's consciousness is the assertion: 'I am life which wills to live, in the midst of life which wills to live.'" If man denies that will-to-live as is done in Indian thought, Schweitzer sees but one logical answer, namely, "to put an end to physical existence." But if he affirms his will-to-live, what then? "Life affirmation is the spiritual act in which he ceases to live unreflectively and begins to devote himself to his life with reverence, in order to raise it to its true value.

"To affirm life is to deepen, to make more inward, and to exalt the will-to-live.

"At the same time the man who has become a thinking being feels a compulsion to give to every will-to-live the same reverence for life that he gives to his own." "The ethic of Reverence for Life is the ethic of Love widened into universality. It is the ethic of Jesus now recognized as a necessity of thought.

"What Christianity needs is that it shall be filled to overflowing with the spirit of Jesus, and in the strength of that shall spiritualize itself into a living religion of inwardness and love, such as its destined purpose should make it."

A vow was taken and a vow was kept. A missionary went to Africa.

In the beautiful volume by Charles R. Joy (to whom all are under such great debt for *Albert Schweitzer, an Anthology*) and by Melvin Arnold entitled, *The Africa of Albert Schweitzer*, there is a final picture bearing the caption, "He marches on before them." It is a path in the jungle. Light streams upon his face and illumines those who follow. Overhead are the palms and the darkness of great trees. And the authors write, "Out of the jungles of Africa, black and mysterious, he comes. Those who know him and work with him are close behind; but back in the night others come, more and more of them, a growing multitude in endless procession—simple, untutored souls who have been touched by his hands of mercy, blessed by his words of love. Along the tortuous forest trails they come, out of the dark into the light. He marches before them, with firm and confident step, with clear, unclouded eyes, bringing to us his gifts of vision and devotion."

A missionary marches on. And out of his life and thought, from the edge of the primeval forest and the forest hospital at Lambarene, there has come a philosophy for civilization; and the quest for the historical Jesus has ended in the greatness that becoming a servant brings. There must be preparation in the heavens, the practice of great choirs, awaiting the coming some day of a man of music, and of science, and of thought, who will sit at the organ to accompany the heavenly host as it sings, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace and good will among men."

# Appendix

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